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HISTORICAL STUDIES

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BY

JOHN RICHARD GREEN

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PREFACE

I HAVE gathered together in this small volume some historical sketches written by J. R. Green during the time of his work in the East End of London, before the writing of the Short History. In the *Letters* lately published, Mr. Green describes the circumstances of difficulty and enthusiasm under which many of these papers were written.

The studies on Dunstan, on London and Stephen, the Ban of Kenilworth, and one or two others, are not otherwise easily accessible. It has seemed well to add (by the kind permission of the proprietors) some reviews which appeared in the *Saturday Review*, since in these the writer frequently breaks out into discussions larger than that of the merit of a single historical volume—as, for example, the aims of history in the past and in the present, the changes it has gone through and the influences that have affected it, the battle of the great classes that made up English life when under the Edwards it broke through feudal tradition, or the examination of some definite facts of history. The brevity of some of these discussions does not make them the less suggestive.

Another interest may be found in some of these papers. When certain historical ideas have passed

into common knowledge and speech, it is usual to suppose that they were always the natural property of the people, and the writer who sets them down appears as the easy popularizer of obvious truisms. We need some effort to recall to ourselves the time of which perhaps we know the least, the years of the last generation. In words that come direct to us out of that half-forgotten period, we discover with frequent surprise what were the actual difficulties and obscurities through which its students pursued the search for knowledge, and may be reminded of the comprehension which the workers of this age do in their turn desire from those who shall follow after them. How few readers now realize the conditions of Mr. Freeman's work as described in pp. 248-9 ! Many a passage in this volume bears its evidence to the zeal, the variety, and the passion of Mr. Green's effort to discover the true form and meaning of the history of his people.

The Notes on the Battle of Hastings have been taken from a pocket note-book as a single illustration among many of his methods of observation and study.

I have hoped that the book would interest those who still read with pleasure the Short History, and who have felt the charm of Mr. Green's *Life and Letters.*

ALICE STOPFORD GREEN.

14 KENSINGTON SQUARE,
29th September 1903.

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I

HISTORICAL STUDIES

GILDAS[1]

I

(1869)

It is not the least among the many merits of Dr. Guest, in his treatment of our earliest history, that he has had the courage to acknowledge the merits of Gildas. Few contemporary writers have been visited with equal severity by later historians; even those who, like Dr. Lappenberg, set aside the absurd doubts thrown recently on his authenticity, lavish their censures on his ignorance of the Roman rule, his rhetorical exaggeration, and the provoking haziness of his description of the Great Conquest, which from its title would seem to form the theme of his book. It is difficult, indeed, not to feel some disappointment when we compare Gildas with the contemporary Provincial who has preserved for us the annals of the Conquest of Gaul. In Gregory of

[1] *Gildas.* English Historical Society. Edited by Rev. J. Stevenson. London.

Gildas und Nennius. Herausgegeben von San Marte. Berlin. 1844.

Tours the old world jostles roughly with the new, but in the very confusion and disorder of the time. The weak, clever subtlety of the Roman, the fierce childish passion of the Frank, the crash of the old administration before the irresistible march of the conqueror, the concentration of all moral life and energy in the Church before which he bowed, form the bold outlines of a picture which finds no parallel in the *liber querulus* of Gildas. But, in truth, the historic value of Gildas lies in the contrast between the two works. The Bishop of Tours is the representative of a new France which has sprung out of conquered Gaul. He owns the barbarian as his master. He describes his marches, his victories, his murders, his greed, with a subject's interest. The bitterness of the Conquest is already past. The fusion of the two races has already begun. The tongue and the laws of the Provincial not only remain his own, they are threatening to become those of the Frank. The religion of Rome has superseded the faith of Woden and of Thor. There is a confusion of peoples and languages and ideas in Gregory's work, as picturesque and as significant as the confusion of the consular insignia with the Teutonic axe in Chlodewig "the Patrician." But no British neck had bowed before the English invader, no British pen was to record the conquests of Hengist or of Cerdic. Slowly, stubbornly, the Provincial of Britain had retreated before the sword of the conqueror, but across the burnt and harried

border of the two races the Englishman remained as strange to him as he had been in his Schleswig home-land. To Gildas, a century after their landing, his foes are still "*ferocissimi illi Saxones, Deo hominibusque invisi*," "dogs," "barbarians," "wolves," "whelps from the kennel of barbarism." Their victories are victories of the powers of evil, chastisements of a divine justice for national sin. Their ravage, terrible as it was, was all but at an end; in a century more, so old prophecies told, their very hold on the land would be shaken off. The prophecy is the first outbreak of that undying hope of the Celt that survived through ages of slavery and death. But of submission to the invader, of intercourse with the barbarian, there is not a word. We hear nothing of their fortunes or of their leaders. Across the border Gildas gives us but a glimpse—doubtless he had but a glimpse himself—of "forsaken walls," of shrines polluted by heathen impiety. Such a silence is of course disappointing enough to the children of the conquerors, eager to learn something of the deeds of those fathers who made the land their own. But in itself it is of the highest historical significance. It is just because Gregory could write the story of Chlodewig or Fredegonde that the temper, the tongue, the laws of his own Gallic province have superseded the temper, the tongue, the laws of the Frank. It is because Gildas, like his race, met his conquerors with nothing but defiance, that the tongue and the law, not of Gildas, but of those con-

querors, remained the tongue and the law of after Englishmen.

Hardly less historical significance is to be found in the strange tone which Gildas adopts towards his own countrymen in the strange caricature which he gives of their history. Certainly all trace of authentic tradition has disappeared when the Roman wall and the fortresses of the Saxon shore are represented as parting gifts of a benevolent Empire to its unworthy subjects, when the trembling Britons are pictured as being dragged from the wall by the hooked weapons of the Picts. But, in fact, nothing shows better the tremendous rift made by the English Conquest in the traditions of Britain than this strange sketch of the history that preceded it. The very promise to give some account of Imperial Britain is qualified by a *quantum potuero*. What he does give comes, he tells us plainly, "not so much from native writings or written memorials, for if any such existed they have been burnt or carried off by those who have fled into exile—at any rate they are not to be found—as from accounts brought over sea (*transmarina relatione*) which frequent interruption of intercourse leaves obscure." In this disappearance of all authentic history, the past took its colour from the very misery which Gildas saw around him. The ruin, the defeat, the feud and bloodshed of the wrecked Province were contrasted with the golden age of a fancied past. Rome became all the dearer as she faded into the distance. Men still clung, as

Gildas clings after a century of severance, to the tone of the Provincial. In them, as in him, the Empire had become a religion; it could not err. The very sufferings of the deserted provinces are their crime. The one chance of preservation in the midst of chaos is to cling to the relics that are left of the old "Ordo" of the Roman rule. If in the traditions of the Conquest we are to see, with Dr. Guest, the contest of a Roman with a British party in the first struggle with the Jute, we must look for the words of Gildas to recall for us the temper of the Provincials under Ambrosius and to enable us to realise by contrast something of the tone of Vortigern and their opponents. Of his British countrymen, of their "levity," of their "ingratitude," Gildas speaks as bitterly and as contemptuously as Swift would have spoken of the Irish under British rule. The first advent of the Imperial eagles seems to him like the arrival of some irresistible destiny, *parendi leges, nullo obsistente, advexit.* When the Province revolts, it is a "treacherous beast"; when the legions hasten to subdue it, it is to wreak the Imperial vengeance on the "deceitful fox-cubs." Over the panic of the Britons before the Roman attack he exults as an Orangeman might have exulted over the Irish panic at the Boyne: "*Ita ut in proverbium et derisum longe lateque efferatur, quod non Britanni sunt in bello fortes nec in pace fideles.*" There is all the "ascendency tone" in his description of the rule which followed on the Roman Conquest; but not even an Ulster

squire could have spoken with such a glow of triumph over the miseries of his fellow-countrymen as this Provincial. He reminds them of their serfage, of the whips that scored their backs, of the yoke that pressed down their necks, how the name of "Romania" had all but superseded that of Britain, how every coin and medal was stamped with the triumphant image of the Cæsar. In the actual politics of the Empire, Gildas is the most unflinching of legitimists; Maximus is a mere usurper, his accession a mere rebellion, his fall a just punishment for his impiety. The outburst is all the more significant if, as we rather gather from his own incidental phrases and from the Welsh traditions, the elevation of Maximus first re-aroused the hope of the conquered races. But with Gildas it is the "illegitimate tyranny" that brought about the ruin of Britain; the inroads of the Picts and Scots only gave him occasion for new insults over the "rebels," for new eulogies of the Empire. He triumphs over the ruin of the Province, over her ignorance in arms, the humiliation of her appeal for aid, the despatch of her *queruli legati* to Aetius. Rome, on the other hand, plays the part of the long-tried but forbearing Mother-Country, hurrying again and again to the rescue, scattering their foes, protecting them with fortresses, withdrawing indeed at last, but withdrawing with an Imperial dignity. It is, as we have said, a strange caricature, but it gives us faithfully enough the aspect which history took in the later Roman

tradition, the story which would have reached us had the Empire won.

In the description which Gildas gives us of the period which intervenes between the earlier Pictish inroads and the coming of the English, we are at once on historic ground. Vague as the story is, it is very different from the merely ideal picture of the Empire which preceded it, and it has been ably vindicated of late in the researches of Mr. Skene. But for directly historical purposes the most valuable portion of the work lies undoubtedly in the three sections which give us the British tradition of the Conquest of Kent. With Dr. Guest we are "not ashamed to confess" that the story carries with it our "entire belief," but the story must be read as it is written, and not according to the preconceived notions of readers. Taken—and it has very commonly been taken—as a general account of the Conquest of Britain, it is no doubt a mere piece of vapid rhetoric; but, not to dwell on the entire misconception of the nature and duration of that conquest which is involved in such an assumption, the notion itself is without the slightest countenance from the narrative as it stands. The story of Gildas is the simple story of the earlier war in Kent, the arrival of the Jutish chieftains at the summons of the Council of Britain, the disputes over their claims for pay and rations, the reciprocal threats which ended in war, the first terrible sally of the new settlers from Thanet, the revival of courage among the Britons,

the victory which checked for a while the progress of the conquerors. It has hardly been noticed with what accuracy all technical terms are used throughout this narrative, and yet no better test of the authenticity of a work is to be found than in its use of technical terms. It is hardly possible that the forger of a later age could have known of that peculiar stage of the provincial government, which finds its only analogy in Gaul, but which a single phrase of Gildas sets simply before us, "*Tum omnes consiliarii una cum superbo tyranno Gwyrthrigerno Britannorum duce caecantur.*" In the withdrawal of the directly Imperial rule the provincial council, which under it had only a consultative power, became necessarily the one source of authority, but the administrative titles, and doubtless the forms of administration, remained as before. How soon the sense of this was lost we see from the change of the "*dux*" in later versions of the story, into the king. The claims of the newcomers on their settlement in Thanet are described with the same technical colour, "impetrant sibi annonas dari," and on the grant of these supplies in kind, "queruntur non affluenter sibi epimenia contribui." Threats followed complaints, and the "Eastern Fire" was soon blazing across the breadth of Kent "from sea to sea." To Gildas, as to his contemporaries, the most terrible feature of the inroad was one which we are apt to forget—its heathen character. In striking contrast with what happened on the Continent, the sword of the in-

vaders seems to have been especially directed against the clergy. They appear to have taken refuge in their churches, and to have rushed out as these were set on fire, to find death on the barbarian sword; no passage better illustrates the style and the historic value of Gildas:—

Ita ut cunctae columnae crebris arietibus, omnesque coloni cum praepositis ecclesiae, cum sacerdotibus et populo, mucronibus undique micantibus ac flammis crepitantibus simul solo sternerentur, et miserabili visu in medio platearum ima turrim edito cardine evulsarum, murorumque celsorum saxa, sacra altaria, cadaverum frustra, crustis semigelantibus purpurei cruoris tecta, velut in quodam horrendo torcular mixti, viderentur.

For the moment the people were panic-stricken; some, overtaken in their flight, were butchered "in heaps"; some fled over sea; others, overcome by hunger, surrendered to become serfs of the conqueror. The passage is so valuable in its bearing on the question of the extermination of the Britons, that we quote the words: "Alii fame confecti accedente manus hostibus dabant in aevum servituri, si tamen non continuo trucidarentur, quod altissimae gratiae stabat in loco." We can hardly doubt that the terrible tale of massacre and exile is the same tale as that told by the English chronicler in the two meagre entries that commemorate the victories of Aylesford and Crayford. But no English record remains of the national reaction which, headed by the fugitives who had taken refuge among the cliffs of the Saxon shore, from Richborough to Pevensey, soon in a decisive

victory swept back the invaders to Thanet. It is here that the book abruptly breaks off. From that time to the great battle of Mount Badon victory wavered from the one side to the other; from that overthrow stretched a long period of peace.

II

(1869)

The biographies of Gildas are so late and so untrustworthy that we are thrown back for information respecting him to the meagre notes of his life which his Epistle has preserved for us. The most definite of these fixes the date of his birth in the year of the battle of Mount Badon, some seventy years later than the landing of the English in Kent. The year was a year memorable in the annals of Britain. Wherever the great battle took place—whether, as Dr. Guest prefers, in the south, or, as we think Mr. Skene has made more probable, in the north of the island—it makes a distinct pause in the advance of the conquerors. London seems, after the first victories of Hengest, to have imprisoned the Jutes within the limits of Kent. The great Andredsweald served as a screen between Britain and the burnt and harried coast where the South-Sexe were settling

down quietly as farmers around the ruined fortresses of the Saxon shore. After a quarter of a century's advance, the terrible Gewissi had halted before the gigantic ramparts of Old Sarum. The great belt of woodland curving round from Dorset to the valley of Thames seemed finally to mark the halt of the southern assailants of the island; while the victories of Arthur, as we dimly read them in the fragment so oddly embedded in the *Nennius*, had, for the hour at least, arrested the dissolution of the North. From London to the Firth of Forth, from the fens of Lincoln to St. David's Head, the province still remained Britain. There was nothing in the long breathing space that followed Mount Badon to herald the second outburst of the English race, that terrible onslaught of forty years, from the victories of Ceawlin to the final overthrow of Chester, that really made Britain England. Between the two attacks stretched half a century of peace, and within this half century lies the life of Gildas. His very tone, indeed, is evidence how rudely the whole fabric of society had been shaken by the struggle which seemed at last at an end. It was not merely that the very tradition of the past had been swept from the mind of the Provincial, that for the confused memories which reached him he was indebted to sources "over sea," to Brittany or to Ireland. It was that Britain had become isolated, that by the occupation of the coast the Province was cut off from all but occasional contact with the general life of the

West. Not a trace of the wider culture of the Pagan world, little more than a trace of Christian literature, appears in the pages of the Epistle. Still peace, and with peace some sort of order, seemed at last to have returned. The imminence of the external danger had for the moment hushed the civil feuds which, far more than the sword of the Saxon, had strewn the fields of Britain with desolate cities. Civil and ecclesiastical society settled down again in seeming harmony for a period which, if we trust the vague expressions of Gildas, lasted through the first thirty years of his life. Then came the change which in half a century more had brought about the final ruin of Britain. Through the ten years from 550 to 560 all peace and order disappeared. The memory of peril from the stranger died with the generation that fought at Crayford and conquered at Mount Badon. Even the presence of the invader, felt more and more along the Eastern coast, where it seems clear that the district beyond the fens was about this time becoming East Anglia, and at least probable that the East Saxons were settling along the Colne and the Lea, passed almost unperceived by the Provincials. Their whole mind, in fact, was bent on the renewal of their ancient strife :—

Illis descendentibus cum successisset aetas tempestatis illius nescia, at praesentis tantum serenitatis et justitiae experta, ita cuncta veritatis et justitiae moderamina concussa ac subversa sunt ut eorum non dicam vestigium sed ne dicam munimentum quidem in supradictis propemodum ordinibus appareat, exceptis

paucis et valde paucis qui ob amissionem tantae multitudinis quae quotidie ruit ad Tartara tam brevis numeri habentur ut in eos quodam-modo venerabilis mater ecclesia in sinu suo recumbentes non videat quos solos veros filios habeat.

It was, in fact, to this "venerable mother" that the disorder was above all attributable. The ecclesiastical aspect of Britain at this time finds its closest analogy in the later ecclesiastical history of Ireland. There, as Dr. Todd has ably pointed out in his monograph on St. Patrick, the Church organised itself on the basis of the clan; tribal quarrels and ecclesiastical controversies became inextricably confounded; no element of union was given as elsewhere by Christianity to the State, while a fatal hindrance to the exertion of all real spiritual influence was thrown in the way of the Church. In the confused strife which preceded the English invasion, the clergy had played a great political part, crowning and slaying kings, till the strife itself seems to have taken something of a theological form. Whatever may be the exact import of the Pelagian controversies which are associated with the legend of St. David, or of the "Arian Plague" of which Gildas speaks, there was a far more fatal danger in the "apostasy," the tendency to relapse into Paganism, which seems to have prevailed in the North. The victories of Arthur and the subsequent successes of Mælgwn saved Christianity for the time, but in the civil strife which had preceded them the moral tone of the British clergy had been hopelessly

destroyed. As Giraldus found the Irish priesthood in the twelfth century, so Gildas saw the British priesthood in the sixth. There was the same strange medley of drunkenness with asceticism, of bitterest strife with self-devotion and saintliness. But Gildas is less inclined to dwell fairly on both sides than the amusing prelate of later years :—

Sed et ipse grex Domini ejusque pastores, qui exemplo esse omni plebi debuerant, ebrietate quam plurimi quasi vino madidi torpebant resoluti, et animositatum timore jurgiorum contentione, invidiae capacibus ungulis, indiscreto boni malique judicio carpebantur.

Such as they were, however, the English invasion set them inevitably in the forefront of the race. The struggle in Britain was not merely a struggle of the barbarian with the Roman, it remained to the close a struggle of Pagan against Christian, and the hostility of the invader had been especially directed against the churches and the clergy. But though the terrible attack had increased their power, it seems to have done little for their character. The fierce invective of Gildas attacks their greed, their indolence, their neglect of spiritual duties, their indifference to the sin all round them, their contempt for sacred duty, their pride, their regard for the rich, their ambition of preferment. There is no reason for crediting this invective with exaggeration. The ecclesiastical aspect of Britain was that of a vast clerical body organised on a secular basis, and in the

absence of those higher influences which intercommunion with a wider world could alone have given, dying down into a mere strife for power and wealth with the secular princes around them. The result of such a process in Ireland we know from the tittle-tattle of Gerald and the reforms of Malachi; that Britain was saved from lay Coarbs and *episcopi vagantes*, she owes to the sword which made Britain England.

The Teutonic Church which ultimately took its place can smile in its own steady instinct of order, in its regulated and decorous good sense, at the extravagances of the Church of the Celt. But it must be remembered that to the world at large the Celt has supplied an element of enthusiasm, of fire, of contagious sentiment, which it could never have gained from the decorum of the Teuton. It is just this fire, this dash, which quickens the turgid pages of the one writer whom the Church of Britain has bequeathed to us. Ascetic, keenly religious in the whole tone of his mind and temper, clinging with a fierce, contemptuous passion to the Roman tradition of the past, but vindicating as passionately the new moral truths with which Christianity fronted a world of license, steeped to the lips in biblical lore, orthodox with the traditional orthodoxy of the Celt, patriotic with the Celtic unreasoning hatred of the stranger, the voice of Gildas rings out like the bitter cry of one of those Hebrew prophets whose words he borrows, rebuking in the same tones of merciless

denunciation the invader, the tyrant, and the priest. It is with a sort of relief that we turn from the historical opening of his Epistle to what some have called the "turgid rhetoric" of its close; the life of the Provincial brightens for us, as we see how the new moral force and freedom given by Christianity jostles with the political serfdom bequeathed by Rome. One after another of the petty chieftains under whom Britain was breaking down into its old chaos of disorder and misrule are branded with the same prophet-like severity. In actual morality they had sunk to the level of the savage: "All," to use the words of their censor, "wallow in the same mire of parricide, fornication, robbery." Perjured, blood-stained, unjust, their crimes were less base than the superstitious cowardice with which they strove to atone for them by heaping wealth on the clergy and the Church. It needed no prophet to foresee a judgment of God gathering for a nation whose rulers were such as these. In the half century that follows the cry of Gildas, the judgment had come. Already the east coast was lost. The English tribes which were destined to cluster around Mercia were soon winning midland Britain. Then came the irresistible advance of the West Saxons, severing the West Welsh from the main body of the British race, and rolling triumphantly along the north of Thames. Everywhere resistance seems to have been fragmentary and local—not national. So far as a national force existed, indeed, it was exhausting

itself in the endless revolutions of the North. Among the princes whom Gildas has denounced, there is one whom he singles out as surpassing all in power and in the variety and enormity of his crimes. Mælgwn had begun with the murder of a royal uncle; then in a fit of wild remorse he had quitted the throne for a monastery; from the monastery he had burst again on the world, had driven away his wife, had murdered his nephew, and lived in adultery with his victim's widow. But, vile as he was, Mælgwn seems to have been an able and a powerful leader. He had inherited the supremacy of those British princes of the Northern borders whose migration a hundred and fifty years before had wrested what we now call North Wales from the Gael; and a struggle, whose memory is preserved in a wild Welsh legend, had set him as chief over his fellow-kings. In a great battle north of Carlisle he again re-established Christianity in the Lowlands of the North, and massed the Celtic kingdoms together in the realm of Strathclyde. It was the last great victory of his race. The exhaustion caused by this distant struggle may have been the cause of the crowning success of Wessex, four years afterwards, at Deorham; the union of the Celtic power in the North seems only to have provoked the final effort of their English antagonists, and the establishment of the power of Northumbria on the field of Dægsastan. But with this closing phase of British history, Gildas has nothing to do. For the later, as for the earlier

struggle, we are without a contemporary chronicler. What he does for us—and it is a service which has hardly been appreciated by later writers—is to paint fully and vividly the thought and feeling of Britain in the fifty years of peace which preceded her final overthrow.

THE CONVERSION OF ENGLAND[1]

(1868)

Mr. Hudson's little volume is far too modest a contribution to an uninviting field of history to call for any very exacting criticism. The story of Queen Bertha is perhaps rather a slender basis for a general survey of the origin, the conquests, the constitution, and social life of our English forefathers, followed quickly by summaries of the history of Celtic as well as English Christianity. There is something amazing, too, in the blind submission with which the author bows down before the three great sources of his information—Mr. Wright, Count de Montalembert, and Dean Stanley. A quotation, indeed, from the last, which serves to introduce his second chapter, is by far the most amusing thing in his book. The Dean has discovered

> five great landings in English history, each of vast importance: the landing of Julius Cæsar, which first revealed us to the civilised world and the civilised world to us; the landing of Hengist and Horsa, which gave us our English forefathers and

[1] *Queen Bertha and her Times.* By E. H. Hudson. London: Rivingtons. 1868.

our English characters; the landing of Augustine, which gave us our English Christianity; the landing of William the Conqueror, which gave us our Norman aristocracy; the landing of William III., which gave us our free Constitution.

Since the time when the Scotchman "saw those roads before they were made," we have heard of nothing so wonderful as the landing which it seems revealed "us" to the civilised world before the second landing had given "us" an existence in the land at all. But even this fades before the last astounding discovery that our "free Constitution" dates from 1688, and was the gift of William of Orange. Whiggism has made some marvellous historical statements in its time, but it has never before ventured on the complete abolition of Simon de Montfort and John Pym. We do not, however, pin Mr. Hudson to the political statement of the Dean any more than to his ecclesiastical one. This writer is certainly very far from supposing that the landing of Augustine alone gave us our English Christianity, and his account of the Northern missionaries shows that people are at last awakening to the importance of the labours of the Celtic Church. Taken, indeed, simply as a popular account of the matter, his little book is good evidence of the progress of sound historic views, and of the way in which, as we have had occasion elsewhere to observe, the more accurate statements of modern scholars are filtering gradually through to the lower levels of literature, and quietly superseding the blunders of the last century.

The first and the most provoking of all ecclesiastical blunders is perhaps less attributable to the last century than to the present one. It was simply theological controversy whose exigencies compelled the High Churchmen of thirty years back to revive "the Ancient British Church," as two centuries before they had forced Usher to invent it. It was a grand thing to meet Popery on its own ground, and, when taunted with the novelty of the Church of the Reformation, to declare Rome the intruder and Augustine the schismatic. A vague text of St. Paul's, an epigram of Martial's, a rhetorical sentence of Tertullian's, based us firmly on apostolic foundations. The presence of three Bishops at a Council, the martyrdom of a Roman soldier, brought us safe to the fourth century, and enabled us with some comfort to view the repulse of a papal aggression by the somewhat bellicose logic of Abbot Dinoth. The theory served its purpose admirably; it survives, in fact, in a great many clerical minds still, with far too wholesome an effect for us to wish its instant abolition; but its absence from Mr. Hudson's little account of our Christianity proves, we trust, that Englishmen are beginning to awake to the fact that they are not Welshmen, and that, as a pure matter of ecclesiastical genealogy, they have as much to do with the monks of Bangor as with the Christians of St. Thomas. The religion of the Roman provincial disappeared with the provincial himself; it was in fact the special mark of the conquest of Britain that it involved the

extermination of the faith of the conquered people. The barbaric conquests of the Continent were wrought either by races which, like the two branches of the Goths, were already Christian, or by heathens like the Frank, who bowed in the hour of victory before the faith of the conquered. To this oneness of religion was owing the preservation of all that actually survived of the Roman world, and in that preservation was involved the exaltation of the agency which preserved it. To the humbled provincial the Bishop became the *Defensor Civitatis*—the mediator between himself and his master, his one bulwark against oppression and ruin. To the barbarian he was the representative of all that was venerable in the past, the living record of law, the one fount of letters and art. It is impossible now to discover why no such conversion modified the character of the English conquest. The vague rhetoric of Gildas seems indeed to point to the priesthood as the special object of barbaric hatred, but he gives not a word of explanation as to its cause. The legends in which Geoffrey of Monmouth paints the Bishops as taking a prominent part in the national resistance may perhaps receive a little confirmation from the fact that when, a hundred years later, they come forward into historic light, they are found sharing in all its bitterness the hatred of their race against the Saxon. But the effect of their extermination on the after religious history of Britain can hardly be exaggerated. When Christianity returned, it came as a stranger into heathen

realms, and its organization had to be moulded on the political forms which it found already existing. In Gaul the dioceses preserved down to the Revolution the actual limits of the Roman province or the Celtic canton. The Primate of the Gauls still had his seat at Lyons, though Lyons in the changes of time had passed to the Empire, and looked as a stranger on the realms of the Frank. In England we necessarily find the converse of this state of things. The new-comers attach themselves to the courts of the kings. The new bishops are at the first royal chaplains. The new diocese is co-extensive with the kingdom. Political divisions which have passed away from memory are thus preserved in the limits of existing sees. The diocese of Rochester, until recent modifications of its bounds, represented the obscure realm of West Kent, and it is possible to restore the true frontier of the original Mercia by following the map of the ancient bishopric of Lichfield. A yet deeper difference between the churches of the Continent and the Church of England sprang from the different origin of their clergy. Abroad, as we have seen, the priesthood represented the race of the conquered; in England the new bishops found none to ordain but the sons of the conquerors. The clergy of England from the outset were a purely national body, of the same blood and living under the same law with the flocks whom they taught. But though time was destined to show the advantages of such a position, its ill effects were the first to show themselves.

There was no learned tradition to raise the priesthood permanently out of the ignorance into which, in Bede's time, they had already sunk. There was no purely ecclesiastical feeling of caste to save them from dying down into the general level of the secular landowner. The very monasteries, a hundred years after their foundation, had sunk into mere manors and farms. It is amazing to find how little Christianity, after the first fervour of its period of aggression, did for the real culture and civilization of the land. A scholar like Bede, a poet like Cædmon, stand out as bright exceptions in the general immobility. Its true activity at home is political rather than religious; its spiritual zeal, its literary enthusiasm, find spheres with Boniface and Alcuin over sea.

It is difficult not to attribute this religious and intellectual stagnation to the influence of the tradition of Augustine; in other words, to the Latin Church in Kent. Dean Hook has well brought out the fact that the period from the death of its first Primate to the arrival of Theodore was for that church a period of total inaction. Its earlier archbishops are strangers; after the razzia of Paulinus on the north it ceases to take any part in the conversion of England; its whole energies seem to exhaust themselves in spurring the Kentish princes to our earliest religious persecutions. Other hands were carrying on the work of evangelization. French and Burgundian missionaries were winning their way in Sussex and the eastern coasts; but the true centre of missionary effort was found in

the Celtic Church of the north. Cuthbert, Aidan, and Chad are the true founders of English Christianity north of the Thames. The very looseness of its ecclesiastical organization seems to have given this Celtic movement a singular power of developing the spiritual and intellectual forces which were latent in the race which it influenced. The first English historian, the first English poet, the first English scholar, the first English missionary, were witnesses to the new impulse which it gave. It fell before the organization of Theodore, and with it all this outburst of life seems to have passed away. No time is intellectually or religiously more barren than the centuries that elapse between the primacy of Theodore and the primacy of Dunstan. And yet it would be absurd to look upon the work of the great eastern Archbishop, or the influence of that Latin Christianity which he represented, as simply injurious. In his work of organization, in his diocesan and parochial arrangements, in his synods and his canons, in his gradual conquest of England for his see, Theodore was really doing a political rather than an ecclesiastical work. The old provincial divisions were breaking down. Slowly and fitfully, through inner dissensions and external attacks, England was drawing together towards national unity. The work was, in fact, accomplished by the Danish invasions, by the ruin of Northumbrian and Mercian independence, and by the heroic resistance which lifted Wessex into the championship of the whole people. But the ground

had been already prepared by the efforts of Theodore. The ecclesiastical unity which he had brought about had paved the way for political oneness; the single throne of Canterbury had made it easy for men to submit to the single throne at Winchester. The regular subordination of priest to bishop, of bishop to primate, formed the mould on which the actual organization of the new kingdom easily framed itself, as the sub-king sank into the ealdorman, and the chief into the thegn. Above all, in his councils lay the germ of the national Witenagemot, and the decrees of his synods formed the precedent for a national system of law. It is this national rather than any ecclesiastical influence that is historically due to the Church of Kent. It was not Christianity that landed with Augustine, but the constitutional forms into which our old Teutonic freedom was to run.

DUNSTAN AT GLASTONBURY

(1862)

DUNSTAN and Alfred are the two great names of our history before the Conquest, and both names are closely linked with the traditions of Somerset. The peasant of Taunton Dean commemorates in his "ashen-fagot ball" the delight with which Alfred's men, coming up cold and hungry through the night to the gathering before Ethandun, clustered round the camp-fires of ashen logs;[1] and the turf-digger of the marshes of the Axe tells the tale of Dunstan's interview with the Devil. When we pass, however, from tradition to history, there is a marked difference between our knowledge of the one great Englishman and of the other. It is impossible to define the exact relation of Alfred to the political system with which his name is associated, or to rely on the poetic legends of the wanderer in the hut of the cow-herd, or the harper in the camp of the Danes. But whether as man or as statesman, Dunstan is perfectly real to us. The ecclesiastical policy which covered England with countless religious houses, all looking back to his

[1] *Trans. Som. Arch. Soc.* 1849, p. 37.

cœnobium at Glastonbury as their fount, was only swept away at the Reformation. The secular policy by which the great minister strove, however prematurely, to combine national unity with the utmost provincial liberty, has left its traces in the real oneness and as real hatred of centralization of the England of to-day. Dunstan is remarkable as the first of that great line of ecclesiastical statesmen who counted among them Lanfranc and Wolsey, and ended in Laud. But he is still more remarkable in himself, in his own vivid personality after eight centuries of revolution and change. In the dim hazy light of our early national history Dunstan stands out perfectly human and real.

The restriction of this paper to his life at Glastonbury prevents me from entering here on many questions of great interest, which have, I think, been as yet insufficiently appreciated in their bearing on his general history. Prominent among these is the contrast between the tone of the English chroniclers, with whom Eadgar is all and Dunstan nothing, and that of the monastic biographers, with whom Dunstan is all and Eadgar a reckless voluptuary. Or again, something might be gained from a critical comparison of the various chronicles commonly blended under the name of the English (or Anglo-Saxon) Chronicle. The only one of them that gives any full notices of him is that which originated in Canterbury itself.[1]

[1] B (Cott. Tib. A vi.) only once mentions him: 977 Trans. of Bp. Sideman.

One question indeed, on which the whole character of his life depends, I shall be compelled to notice here—I mean the strange fortune by which a false biography of the man has been almost universally substituted for the true. But I shall only rectify this error here in so far as it affects our Somerset Dunstan, not Dunstan the statesman, the primate, the reformer, but Dunstan the boy, the monk, the abbot of our Somerset Glastonbury.

Dismissing the later hagiographies, the Life by William of Malmesbury (as yet unpublished, but of whose character we can judge from his copious notices in the *Gesta Regum*, etc.), the metrical compilation of Adelard, and the fragment by Osbert or Eadmer, all

C (Cott. Tib. B i.) only twice :
1. Same entry in same words.
2. Death in 988.

D (Cott. Tib. B iv.) only thrice :
1. Driven beyond sea, 957.
2. Council at Calne, 978.
3. Death, 988.

E (Bodl. 636) only thrice :
1. Consecrates Ethelwold, 963.
2. Calne, 978.
3. Death, 988.

F (Cott. Dom. A viii.) only eight times :
1. Birth, 925.
2. Gift of Glastonbury, 943.
3. Banished, 955.
4. Return, 959.
5. Archbp., 961.
6. Calne, 978.
7. Trans. King Eadward, 980.

(D and E mention this, but omit mention of Dunstan.)
8. Death, 988.

I have compiled this from Thorpe's Edition. A's (C. C. C. 173) entries are but insertions from F. F is supposed to have been compiled at Canterbury.

mere copies of their predecessors, but enlarged by the admission of the worthless traditions of Glastonbury, there are but two biographies of historic importance. The first is that of a priest, who has left us but his initial "B," but whom (adopting Mabillon's conjecture) we may call Bridferth of Ramsey. It is dedicated to Dunstan's scholar, Archbishop Ælfric, and is the work of a contemporary and acquaintance of the subject of its biography. It professes to be drawn partly from personal observation, partly from information supplied by Dunstan himself, partly from the reminiscences of his scholars.[1] Its style, verbose, inflated, laden with texts of Scripture, is the style of its day, but its inner truthfulness and simplicity is its own. No Dunstan is more unlike the conventional Dunstan than the Dunstan of Bridferth's biography. Very silent about miracles, unacquainted with the anchorite's cell or the visits of Satan, the writer pictures simply enough a quiet Englishman, versatile, accomplished, kindly-hearted, waiting for the call which he knew must come, and the work which he knew he had to do, as quietly as Cromwell waited for his work by the banks of the Ouse.

The conventional Dunstan did not appear for nearly a century after Bridferth. On the destruction

[1] "Quae vel videndo vel audiendo ab ipso didiceram vel etiam ex ejus alumnis quos a tenella juventutis aetate ad viros usque perfectos doctrinarum pabulis decenter instructos ipsemet educando deduxit" (B. in praefat.). And in relating his death: "Arbitror aequum esse ut ea quae vel egomet vidi vel audivi pro posse caritatis enodem."

of the records and MSS. of Canterbury by the great fire which destroyed the Cathedral in 1070, Osbern, Precentor and Sub-prior, a man of great literary note in his day,[1] was commissioned by the convent to supply, in Dunstan's case, the loss. He had before him, he tells us, two classes of biographies, the one (probably the metrical compilation from B. by Adelard) written "with plenty of elegance but with little diligence," the other (no doubt that of Bridferth himself) "with plenty of diligence but with little elegance." Osbern determined to combine the merits of both, but his diligence and his elegance were alike fatal to Dunstan. The first showed itself in the large additions now made to his biography. Partly, these were due to a third class of lives which, he asserts, had perished in the fire, but fragments of which remained "in an English version." But, whatsoever be the truth of this, the bulk of his additions can be clearly traced to another source. In the interval between Bridferth and Osbern the monks of Glastonbury had spared neither pains nor invention in providing legends and relics of the greatest of their Abbots. Osbern[2] had visited the sacred spot, had seen the saint's work-cell, had handled (he boasts)

[1] "Osbernus, qui ejus vitam Romana elegantia composuit, nulli nostro tempore stylo secundus" (W. Malm. *Gest. Reg.* lib. ii. sec. 149, Hardy).

[2] Osbern, sec. 13. "Miserum me ac peccatorem fateor inspexisse sanctum sessionis ipsius locum, vidisseque etiam manuum illius opera, peccatricibus manibus contrectasse, oculis apposuisse, rigasse lacrymis, et flexis genibus adorasse." Immediately before this comes the story of the "Destina" or work-cell, immediately after it the interview with the Devil.

the very products of his craft, had bedewed them with his tears, and adored them on bended knees. Around them clustered a jungle of myths as baseless as the contemporary myths of the same great Abbey about Joseph of Arimathea. It was easy, however, for the "elegance" of Osbern to throw them into shape, and the biography which resulted soon drove the simpler tale of Bridferth from the field. Nor even now is it possible, even while irritated by the carelessness of his copying, his indifference to chronology, his unscrupulous emendations and transpositions of the authority which he follows, to refrain from admiring the rare dramatic faculty with which Osbern has succeeded in blending these discordant accounts together, and creating out of them the weird demoniac Dunstan who is so familiar to all of us.

But though familiar he is not very intelligible. This poetic creation of a Canterbury monk of the eleventh century has sadly puzzled the historian and biographer of the nineteenth. The latest biography is that by Dean Hook, and is an honest attempt to do justice to the great minister. But it is almost amusing to see the Dean's efforts to bring his vigorous common sense to bear on this imaginary Dunstan. In successive pages he appears as an "able statesman," as a "bold reformer," as "frenzied," as "partially insane," a "delirious dreamer," a "monomaniac," a "ventriloquist." But with this wealth of resources for explanation the Dean leaves him a puzzle after all. For, as the world is at present constituted, it is

not by ventriloquism or monomania that men are enabled to do what Dunstan undoubtedly did, to revive religion and learning over the length and breadth of the land, and to hold together for half a century a monarchy which, in its artificial structure and balanced policy, contained within it the seeds of its own decay.

To render him intelligible we have but to recur to Bridferth's biography, and to view the Dunstan he depicts for us in connection with his country and his time. We claim him as a Somerset man, but we must not confound the Somerset of the tenth century with the Somerset of to-day. In the forest near Malmesbury, and the masses of wood beneath the edge of the chalk downs of Wilts, still linger the scanty remains of the great forest which, bent like a bow from Severn to Selwood, must have greatly narrowed Somerset to the north-east and the north; westward, its boundary was the Parrett; the Brit-Welch wandered either free or as nominal tributaries from Quantock to Exeter; and Glastonbury in Dunstan's day was still "in West-Saxonum finibus."[1] The little vill marked a stage in the long history of the West-Saxon Conquest, a history very difficult to follow in the meagre notices of the national chronicle. The conquest was protracted through a century and a half by the external and internal hindrances of the conquerors, by endless wars with Sussex, by a life-and-death struggle with Mercia.

[1] Bridferth, sec. 3

An interval of eight years of inaction separates the victory at Deorham, which made Ceawlin master of Bath, from the victory at Bradford, when under Kenwalch the invaders overspread the country north of Mendip. A second campaign, three years later, ending in the victory at "Peonna" on the skirts of the great forest that covered Somerset to the east, settled the conquerors round the sources of the Parrett. Then followed a lull of a quarter of a century, ere Kentwine swept down the vale of Avalon to "drive the Britons to the sea," and Ini, pushing his way southward round the marshes of the Parrett to the aid of his kinsman Nun against the Welch prince Geraint, guarded the frontier of the new conquests by his wooden fort on the banks of the Tone,[1] and established beneath the heights of the Tor his "cœnobium" of Glastonbury. This protracted conquest was the root of the after supremacy of Wessex. Long after external ag grandisement had ceased elsewhere, while the other English kingdoms were wasting their strength in internecine wars, Wessex had new march-lands to share among its victorious soldiers. Each successive wave of invasion has left its mark in the local names of the district over which it passed, and the varying proportion of these to the Celtic or other non-English names around them throws a little light on the character of the conquest. We may take as a rough index the well-known English termination

[1] Our Taunton.

"ton." North of Mendip this bears to all other names the proportion of about one-third; between Mendip and the Parrett of a fourth. Across the Parrett, but east of the road from Watchet to Wellington, it decreases to a fifth, and westward of this it becomes rapidly rarer and bears only the proportion (in different districts) of an eighth or tenth. The "tons" and "hams" of the settlers were the seed-plots of a new life before which the old Romanized Somerset was passing away. The new settlers left the towns to themselves, and toiled among their British serfs at husbandry as heartily as they had toiled at war. No picture better illustrates the life of the early English settler than that of the Icelander in the Saga of Burnt Njal, sowing the seed with one hand and holding his bare sword with the other. Irish pilgrims wandered from hamlet to hamlet, and the gipsy-like court of the king settled at vill after vill till the beeves were all slaughtered and the mead-pitchers empty. Meanwhile the great towns, the villas, the industrial works of the Roman æra fell unheeded into decay. Bath was dwindling away, though still great enough for the coronation of a king. The peasant told among the ruins of Ilchester the curious legend of the birds and the blazing brands, which probably illustrates the mode of its capture. Bristol was not as yet, and not a town rose among the villages and hamlets between Bath and Exeter. The country houses of the great provincials, which had studded so

thickly the face of the country, lay burnt or in decay. The mines of Mendip and Brendon, whence their wealth had been drawn, were abandoned or forgotten. The sea burst again through the neglected barriers, and the Tor rose like an island out of a waste of flood-drowned fen and marsh that stretched westward to the channel.

From one of these English families who had chosen it as their settlement the little hamlet at its base took its name of Glastonbury, the borough of the Glæstingas.[1] It was already a place of pilgrimage. The first inhabitants of Ini's cœnobium found, as they alleged, "an ancient church built by no art of man," and to this (probably some deserted Roman villa) they added an oratory of stone. It was doubtless the only church in the district, and hence was crowded with worshippers from the neighbourhood.[2] The cœnobium lay on the border of the estate of Heorstan,[3] the husband of Cynedridis. Both are asserted by Osbern to have been of royal blood; they were certainly well-connected. One brother, Athelm, the first of the Bishops of Wells, became

[1] So Kemble. *Saxons in England*, vol. i. Appendix. But "antiquo vicinorum vocabulo Glæstonia nuncupata" (B. sec. 3).

[2] "In ea siquidem ipsius loca primi Catholicae legis neophitae antiquam Deo dictante repererunt ecclesiam nulla hominum arte constructam . . . huic etiam aliud addiderunt opere lapideo oratorium quod Christo ejusque S. Petro Apostolo dedicaverunt. Porro dehinc universorum circumquaque fidelium frequentia colebat, et jam dictae pretiosum insulae locum humiliter frequentabat" (B. sec. 3).

[3] "Erat quaedam regalis in confinio ejusdem viri insula" (B. sec. 3).

Plegmund's successor in the see of Canterbury; another brother, Elfege, was Bishop of Winchester; Kinesige, the Bishop of Lichfield, is mentioned incidentally as a kinsman. Heorstan was at any rate a thane of some wealth, a man of piety as the times went, and fond of joining the pilgrims as they passed by, taper in hand, to the adjacent shrine. On one of these occasions his boy Dunstan accompanied him to share his nocturnal vigils, and the early biographer tells a charmingly natural tale,[1] how, while his parents watched, the weary child fell into a pleasant sleep, and woke to tell his dream of an old man, clad in white, who had led him through ever-lengthening aisle and cloister of church and cell. Dreams of this kind are the heritage of childhood, but it was easy for Dunstan, living like Warren Hastings to realise in stone and mortar the fancies of his youth, to look on them as revelations from Heaven. This is the only incident of his childhood recorded by either biographer; but we glean in the progress of his story a few details which give us a hint of his home. It must have been in his father's hall that the fair diminutive boy,[2] with his scant but beautiful hair,[3] caught his charm over animals,[4] his love for the "vain songs of ancient heathendom, the trifling legends, and the funeral chaunts,"[5] which afterwards

[1] B. sec. 3. Osbern's expansion of this is a fair specimen of his workmanship. Osbern, sec. 3.

[2] "Quantitate quidem corporis parvulum" (Osbern, 5).

[3] "Tenui sed formosa caesarie erat" (Osbern, 14).

[4] See story *postea*. B. 6.

[5] Charges of his enemies, *postea*. B. 6.

roused against him the charge of sorcery. Thence, too, from the practice, as we see it in the story of Cædmon, of passing the harp round the hall from one reveller's hand to another, he may have derived his passionate love of music and his custom[1] of carrying his harp in his hand on journey or visit. His parents fade from sight as they lead him to school, but they lived long in the heart of Dunstan. Years after, amid other celestial revelations, he told of a vision of Heorstan and Cynedridis among a company of angelic spirits.[2]

Neighbours were not the only pilgrims to the Church of Christ and St. Peter. It became the centre of the religion of the West, and even the great Athelstan himself came thither to pray and carouse. None held it in greater honour than the wandering scholars, "peregrini," of Ireland. From the sixth century to the eighth the Irish had been the great missionaries of Christianity; from the ninth to the eleventh, precisely when all learning threatened to become extinguished, they were the missionaries of knowledge.[3] A tradition of its having been the resting-place of a Patrick the Younger made Glastonbury the resort of the "Hiberniensium peregrini," who left here, as along the Rhine or the Danube, "their books," to be hereafter diligently studied by Dunstan.[4] To the cœnobium, whose library was

[1] "Sumpsit secum ex more citharam suam quam lingua paterna 'hearpam' vocamus" (B. 12). [2] Osbern, sec. 3.

[3] Ozanam, *Civilisation chez les Francs*, i. 102.

[4] B. 5. "Porro Hibernensium peregrini locum quem dixi

thus enriched, he was now brought for education by his parents. It is pleasant to think how little change time can have made in the natural features of the scene on which he must have gazed—the great moor, the islet-hills dotting it, the cliff-like mass of Mendip in the distance. It was a time of profound peace for the West during the youth of Dunstan: the war under Eadward and his sister of Mercia rolled stubbornly northward, the solitary descent of the Danes upon Watchet was repulsed, and it was only in the dawn of the youth's manhood that the slender, golden-haired Athelstan swept by to drive the Brit-Welch from Exeter. But the traditions of the death-struggle with the Danes must have been fresh in the minds of all. Heorstan may have been one of the men of Somerset who gathered to Alfred at Selwood; Athelney, where the King lurked, lay but a few miles off across Polden; and Wedmore, where Guthrum's chrismal fillet was unbound, lay below in the marshes. Amid these scenes and traditions the boy who was to carry on and complete the work of Alfred passed the years of his youth, outstripping his companions, and roving[1] over the literature, sacred and profane, of his house, till the overtasked

Glestoniae *sicut et caeterae fidelium turbae* magno colebant affectu, et maxime ob B. Patricii junioris honorem qui faustus ibidem in Domino quievisse narratur. Horum etiam libros, rectae fidei tramitem philosophantes, diligenter excoluit; aliorumque prudentum quos ab intimo cordis aspectu Patrum Sanctorum assertione solidatos esse persensit, solubili semper scrutamine indagavit." The words in italics preclude Osbern's fiction of an "Irish School."

[1] B. 5. "Velut apis ingeniosa"—"How doth the little busy bee."

brain broke down into fever and delirium.[1] Bursting from the control of his nurse, the boy rushed down the road toward the church, whirling from side to side the stick he had snatched up to keep off the hounds which his frenzy imagined in pursuit of him. He scaled the ladders which led to the roof, and threading his way along its timbers descended in safety among the slumbering "custodes." The result of this wonderful escape was a resolve on the part of his parents to devote him to the life of a "clericus," or professional man of the day, and with this purpose he was now placed in the cœnobium of Glastonbury.[2] Here his rapid progress continued; his knowledge, especially of the Irish books in the library, became famous in the neighbourhood and reached (perhaps when wandering in the neighbourhood) the court of the King. He seems himself to have made his appearance there, but only to excite the ill-will of the courtiers, many of whom were kinsfolk of his own. Charges of magic, of addiction to the old heathen legends and spells, were made against him;

[1] B. 4 breaks out into verse on the subject. For the dogs cf.

"Fustem ac surculeum rapuit tunc forte repertum
Quocum percutiens ambabus partibus auras,
A canibus rabidis *quasi* se defenderet,"

with Osbern's "Necdum medium itineris confecerat, cum malignus spiritus latrantium canum multitudine stipatus occurrit, viamque eunti intercludere contendit." Dunstan shakes his stick in his face and abuses him! Sec. 7.

[2] Osbern places this event after his admission to the "school" at Glastonbury. It is clear from B. 4, 5 (whom he is copying) that he only entered the cœnobium in consequence of it, and had been well taught *before*.

his enemies drove him from the King's train, and, waiting for him as he passed through the marshes, threw him from his horse, and, with the wild passion of a rude age, trampled him underfoot in the mire.[1] A mile off stood a friend's house, and thither Dunstan crawled as they rode away; the fierce house-dogs rushed out at one who, in his miry guise, seemed more monster than man, but (the story lights up a side of Dunstan's character) recognized his voice and fawned upon him.[2] It was probably to the house of his kinsman[3] Elfege the Bald, Bishop of Winchester, the demesnes of whose see covered a large part of Somerset, that the bemired scholar made his way. "Become a monk" was the probably very friendly advice of Elfege, but the charms of a young lady-love,[4] whose caresses he every day enjoyed, were of

[1] B. 6. "Nonnulli propriorum sodalium et Palatinorum, tum quam maxime consanguineorum suorum qui salutiferis actibus ejus invidebant . . . dicentes illum ex libris salutaribus et viris peritis non saluti animarum profutura sed avitae gentilitatis vanissima didicisse carmina et historiarum frivolas colere incantationum naenias . . . projecerunt in lutulenta palustrium loca et . . . pedibus superimprimebant . . . in foetenti volutabro dehonestarent . . . canes acerrimi . . . crudeli latratu hunc invaserunt, tamen ut blandientis vocem audierunt, mox esse illius ex eo tantummodo reticentes agnoverunt."

[2] Osbern gives a sketch of his court life — makes him court favourite and judge ! ! This, in a boy, staggers modern biographers, but they still follow Osbern in placing here the episode of the self-sounding harp. Hook, i. 387.

[3] B. 7. "Propinquus ipsius."

[4] "Cujus quotidie blanditiis foveretur." The lively discussion between Elfege and Dunstan, in Osbern, sec. 12 (and thence enlarged by Dean Hook, i. 389, 390), is a fair specimen of his invention. Bridferth, whom he is closely following, gives not a syllable of it.

more weight than the attractions of celibacy. A severe attack, however, of what seems to have been a dropsical disease, seconded the exhortation of his kinsman, and Dunstan rose from his sick-bed a monk. A narrow escape from a falling stone and the death of his Glastonbury friend, the Deacon Wulfred, confirmed him in his choice. Wulfred appeared to him in a dream, relating things of heaven and earth, and, on Dunstan asking a sign, led him into the porch, pointed to an unoccupied spot on its southern side, and announced the burial of a priest there before three days elapsed. Dunstan, visiting the place at daybreak with a group of friends, threw a stone at the spot as he passed, saying lightly, "If what I dreamt be true, a priest has to be buried here ere three days are over." No sooner had he retired than the fated priest entered, chose it as the spot of his interment, and died within the appointed time.[1]

The incident had no small effect on the fortunes of Dunstan. The priest thus buried had been the spiritual guide (perhaps the husband)[2] of Ethelfleda, one of those Englishwomen of high rank who, like Bertha or Hilda, play no unimportant part in our early church history. Desirous, after her husband's death, of living the life of a nun unattached, she built for her residence a dwelling near the western part of the church, and spent her wealth in works of charity and the entertainment of pilgrims. Amongst

[1] B. 9.

[2] B. 9. "Magister atque sacerdos." *Ibid.* 10, "post amissum virum."

these came King Athelstan, and the story of the royal dinner gives a lively picture of the English court on its travels. The "praevisores" of the King's table arrive the day beforehand to see if all be ready, and, after due inspection, signify their approval of the preparations "if only there is no lack of mead." Ethelfleda, hurt at the apprehended disgrace, flies to the altar of the Virgin and implores her aid for the morrow. On the morrow the King arrives, followed by the long train of his court,[1] and after prayers and mass adjourns to the hall for dinner. All day long the cup-bearers with horns and vessels draw at the mead cask, but without exhausting it, till the feast ends and the King rides off.[2] Dunstan had become a monk, but the monastic profession seems to have been little more than a vow of celibacy. He now became the chaplain and guide of Ethelfleda. "He ever clave to her and loved her in wondrous fashion," is the simple remark of his early biographer.[3] The wealth of his devotee was placed unreservedly at his command, his sphere begins to widen, we see him followed by a train of pupils,[4] busy with literature,[5]

[1] B. 10. "Stipatus multo comitatu."

[2] B. 10. "Pincernis, ut assolet in regalibus conviviis, cornibus, sciphis aliisque indiscretae quantitatis vasibus totum diem propinantibus."

[3] B. 10. "Huic vero semper adhaerebat Dunstanus qui hanc prae caeteris modis mirabilibus adamavit." B. 11. "Quasi propriam matrem unice custodivit."

[4] B. 11. "Cum se sequentibus scholasticis."

[5] "Inter sacra literarum studia, ut in omnibus esset idoneus, artem scribendi, necnon citharizandi, pariterque pingendi peritiam diligenter excoluit" (B. 12).

writing, harping, painting, designing. One morning the Lady Ethelwynn summons him to her house to design a stole which she is embroidering. He goes carrying with him his harp (as was his wont) to amuse his friends in their labours. Dinner over, as he returns with Ethelwynn and her maidens to their toil, the harp, hanging on the wall, sounds, without mortal touch, tones which frame themselves in the excited ears around into the antiphon, "Gaudent in coelis," while girls and matron drop their embroidery and stare at one another in mute amazement.[1]

We may pause here to compare this genial scholar-life, so far as it has gone, with the Rembrandtesque sketch which Osbern and the modern biographers and historians in his train have made so familiar to us. In his story the usual wonders prelude the birth of the wondrous child: a sudden darkness fills the church as his mother, Cynedridis, kneels there in the gloom of a February morning—every taper save her own is extinguished and needs to be rekindled at its flame.[2] The books left by the Irish peregrini are transmuted into an establishment of Irish scholars receiving for education the sons of the adjacent thanes, which again, in the after-development of the Dean of Chichester, is discovered to have "resembled closely one of our modern colleges."[3] The youth visits the court, becomes favourite and chancellor, and flies a disgraced courtier. In his

[1] B. 12. "Attonitae sese invicem aspiciebant."
[2] Osbern, sec. 4.
[3] Hook, *Archb. Cant.* i. 385.

bitterness he turns, not merely monk, but anchorite. His cell does not, from Bridferth's silence, seem to have arisen in the first biographer's day, but Osbern has seen it "more like a tomb than a dwelling," five feet in length, in breadth about two and a half. Here the wild anchorite worked the night through at his forge, and through its little window the Devil looked in at the grey of eve.[1] Very vivid is Osbern's rendering of the well-known legend—the Devil chatting of wine and women while the saint is quietly heating his tongs at the fire until the longed-for moment arrives, when, snatching them from the forge, he fastens on the grisly face,[2] and, struggling with might and main, drags the monster inside. At last the Devil wriggles away, breaking with shouts of "Oh, what has this bald-head done?"[3] the slumbers of the villagers. His fame gathers to the cell pilgrims of every age and rank, amongst them Elgiva, who, entranced with his conversation, resolves to settle there and live and die with him.

It is impossible not to admire the wild poetry of Osbern's conception of the anchorite, but no conception could have been less in accordance with the Dunstan of Bridferth and of fact. From the happy quiet of his Glastonbury life he was now suddenly called into a wider sphere by the change of ministry which seems to have followed the death of Athelstan

[1] "Sub obscuro vespere" (Osb. 14).

[2] "Larvalem faciem." I know of no authority for the "nose." Osb. 14.

[3] "Oh, quid fecit calvus iste" (Osb. 14).

and accession of Eadmund in 940. The tie which had bound him to it had been previously broken. It chanced one day that Dunstan had been absent from the common vespers and was approaching the church at eve with his scholars to complete the office, when, in the waning light of the eastern sky, he saw afar off a white dove of wondrous beauty, winging its way to the house of Ethelfleda. It was the precursor of her death.[1] The old jealousies seem to have revived on Dunstan's appearance at the court, then stationed, apparently, at "Ceodrum," perhaps Cheddar.[2] The faction of his opponents prevailed, he counted the game lost, and betaking himself to some envoys from Essex, then staying at court, besought and obtained a promise of settlement in that kingdom, and prepared to depart in their train. Eadmund spent the day in the chase; the red deer which he had pursued dashed over Cheddar cliffs,[3] and the King's horse only checked itself on the brink of a ravine, while Eadmund, in the bitterness of anticipated death, was recalling his injustice to Dunstan. He was at once summoned on the King's return. "Make haste and saddle your horse," said Eadmund, "and journey with me." The royal train passed from Mendip over the marshes to Glastonbury;[4] there, entering the church, the King took Dunstan by the hand, bestowed on him the

[1] B. 11. [2] B. 13.

[3] B. 14. "Est ibi in proximis locis Ceoldri quoddam inter alia plura praecisi montis praecipitium, mira quidem et immensa profunditate devexum."

[4] "Viam quae ducit Glestoniam recto tramite" (B. 14).

kiss of peace, and seated him in the priestly chair as Abbot of Glastonbury.

Dunstan can have been still but a young man when he became (in the Benedictine sense of the word) the founder of English monasticism. The King's gift was rather that of the royal vill and its accompanying fisheries than of what later times would regard as a religious house. What came of the gift was the creation of Dunstan himself. Every English abbey of the future looked back as its parent to the cloister that rose to realize the dream of his youth. Every great monastic school looked back for its model to the great school of the West, whence four primates had mounted in succession the chair of Canterbury.

Of Dunstan himself as Abbot very little is told us. We see him in various stories walking, staff in hand,[1] with brother Elfege, from cell to cell, inspecting the kitchen arrangements, superintending the new buildings, the fruits of Ethelfleda's legacy, up at dawn correcting faulty manuscripts, busy in reconciling the brethren, or engaged in divine service with eyes and hands uplifted and face often bathed in tears. But the life of Ethelwold gives us a pleasant peep into the interior of the Abbey.[2] Learned, active in body and mind, the son of the burgher of Winchester had mounted into court favour, and, with a view to promotion, had been

[1] "Spiculo quod semper secum chyra dextera convehebat" (B. 16). "Quem secum semper manu advehebat baculum" (B. 17).

[2] *Life* by Wolstan. Acta Sanct. Aug. 1, p. 83.

ordained with Dunstan. He now joined him in his new monastery. In study, whether of books or of music, in prayer and mortification, Ethelwold rapidly took the lead of his fellows; but even when appointed Dean he still remained abbey-gardener, and gathered with his own hands the apples and beans for the brethren's refection. In him Dunstan saw the great engine he needed for the development of monasticism in England. A dream showed him a tree of wondrous height, stretching its branches north and south, eastward and westward over all Britain, its boughs laden with countless cowls, while a cowl of larger size than all crowned the topmost twig. The tree, Dunstan interpreted, was England as it was to be; the big cowl, Ethelwold.

Ethelwold, a famous teacher himself, as Abbot of Abingdon, probably learnt the art under Dunstan. All tradition told of the kindliness of Dunstan's teaching. A hundred years after, when the annual whipping-time for Canterbury school arrived (it was a yearly custom in the Cathedral to give the boys a sound whipping all round at Christmas, not for any definite fault, but with a view to their general improvement), the poor little wretches crowded weeping to his shrine, and besought aid of their "dear father Dunstan." Dunstan it was—so every Canterbury schoolboy believed—who set the masters first asleep and then a-quarrelling till the whipping blew over.[1] And the tradition is only in accordance

[1] Osbern, Miracles, sec. 15. The story (Osbern shared it himself) is most interesting and vividly told.

with the few stories preserved of his actual intercourse with his boys. In the midst of a visitation at Bath, his thoughts were with them, and he told how he had seen the soul of one of them carried heavenward, along a path of light, among an innumerable company of angels.[1] More interesting, because more authentic, is the tale told to Bridferth by the boy, afterwards a prelate,[2] who shared the adventure. The monks had all quitted the Abbey to meet the funeral train which was bringing thither the corpse of the Steward Wulfric. None remained save the Abbot and one little schoolboy; and the two walked out together to see if the brethren were in sight. As they went along,[3] "singing according to their wont," a stone, flung at them from the other side of the old church, missed Dunstan's head, but knocked off the cap which he wore.[4] "Run and pick up the stone," said the Abbot, turning to the boy, "and bring it for me to look at." All men agreed that no stone of the kind, big or little, was to be found within the borders of Somerset; that it was, in fact, a "shy" of the Devil's. Dunstan, however, bade it be preserved in safe keeping, and so became, it would seem, the first geologist of the West.

Here, however, we must leave the Dunstan of Bridferth, less romantic, less dramatic than his better-

[1] Osbern, *Life*, sec. 20.
[2] Bridferth, sec. 18. Probably told by Archbishop Ælfric.
[3] "Dum semper ex more psallentes incederent" (*Ib.*).
[4] "Pileum, quo caput velabat" (B. 18).

known "double," yet (as it seems to me) more natural, and no less great. He leaves the impression, not of the wild anchorite or the stern fanatic of the common biographers, but of a nature gay, sunny, versatile, artistic; full of strong affections, and capable of inspiring others with affections as strong. As a boy his school-fellows weep for him in dread of his death;[1] as a youth he has a bosom friend in the Deacon Wulfred; throughout his manhood he seems always to have won the devotion of women—of his lady-love, of Ethelfleda, of the queen-mother Eadgive.[2] His affability is one of the marked traits of his character: he is the favourite alike of his schoolboys, his monks, and the populace.[3] Quick-witted, of strong memory, a ready and fluent speaker,[4] of gay and genial address, an artist, a musician,—he was at the same time a hard student, an indefatigable worker, busy at books, at building, at handicraft. We leave him as yet neither minister nor archbishop, but Abbot Dunstan; his slender frame leaning on his cross-headed staff, his scant fine hair covered by his cap, singing psalms with the little schoolboys, and dreaming of a future for England, when, from that seed-plot at Glastonbury, monasteries should be scattered broadcast over the land, and cowls should

[1] "Flebat scholasticorum coetanea turba" (Osbern, 7).

[2] See B. 19.

[3] See the picturesque scene at his funeral. Osbern, sec. 45. "Sub immenso murmure lugentium populorum feretrum densissime ambientium, facies suas dissecantium, palmis sese ferientium, atque amaris vocibus, 'Heu! heu! carissime Pater!' clamantium."

[4] "Dicendi facultas" (Osbern, 34).

hang upon every branch of that mighty tree. The funeral of King Eadmund rolls in; the hour has struck when the dream has to be thrown aside for action, and the Dunstan of Somerset must broaden into the Dunstan of England.

FREEMAN'S "HISTORY OF THE NORMAN CONQUEST"[1]

I

(1867)

It is curious to trace the gradual steps by which history in the modern world has arrived at an adequate conception of its true method and purpose; in other words, to run through the interval which separates the annals of a monk of the ninth century from such a work as this of Mr. Freeman's. The aim of the annalist, as he jotted down the famine of one year or the war of another, was chronological rather than historical; the mere events he recorded were recorded simply as marks of time, which might serve to prevent the confusion of one year with another. In the chronicler who followed him, this mere distinction of time sank into its proper subordination to the narrative of events, but of events presenting themselves under their barest and most primary

[1] *The History of the Norman Conquest.* By Edward A. Freeman, M.A. Vol. i. 1867; vol. ii. 1868; vol. iii. 1869; vol. iv. 1871.

aspects, to be told in the mere order of succession, without reference to their causes or relations in the present or the past. The story of the chronicler has all the charm of the world's childhood, all the definiteness and simplicity of a first impression transferred directly from the eye or the ear of the teller to the words he tells. It was a charm that vanished as the growth of civilisation brought reflection with it—still more as the recovery of the greater works of classical literature suggested larger views of man's social and political relations, and at the same time furnished models on which the new thoughts which they suggested might frame themselves. To the modern historian who is simply consulting them as authorities for his own narrative, there is something provoking in the transition from the truthfulness and life of the English Chronicle to the vague and rhetorical generalities of William of Malmesbury. But historically the progress is immense; the simple record of facts has widened into a picture of the mind of the writer; and in Orderic, in the two Williams of Malmesbury and Newburgh, and in Matthew Paris we see events under lights the most diverse, in their relation to the Church, to the new Christendom which was beginning to feel its own unity, to the cool sceptical intelligence before which the old order of the world was to pass away, to the feelings of patriotism and nationality out of which the new order was to arise. In a word, history had begun, but it seemed to be born only to vanish

away. Partly from the literary death of the great monastic houses which had been its nurseries, partly from the distraction of the intellectual forces of the world into theological and speculative channels, partly from the growth of romance which took from it that interest of curiosity which had till then attached itself simply to the narratives of historic events, the space from the close of the thirteenth century to the Reformation is a mere blank in historical progress. Confining ourselves here to England, we see Froissart transferring history to the field of the new romance, and the successors of Matthew Paris dying down into the most meagre of annalists. The Reformation quickened history into a new life, as it quickened the world; the consciousness of national existence, of which it was the outcome, naturally sought its vindication in the study which is, after all, but the mental reflection of that consciousness; and the first purely Protestant primate, Archbishop Parker, was the first by his collections and publications to revive the spirit of historical inquiry. But although a happy instinct taught the English scholars of the seventeenth century to select what really were the most important records of the past—and it must be remembered that, with one or two exceptions, no addition of any real value has been made to the stores they preserved—no instinct could teach them the true principles on which the study of these records had to be based. On the contrary, they were led away by the

theological spirit, which in every department of knowledge has been the bane of all true progress, and the wider questions of the development of national or social life were subordinated to the miserable controversies of warring sects.

But, by a singular compensation, the controversies which blighted history on one side of the Channel gave birth to its true method of study on the other. The original aim of the vast collection of the Lives of the Saints which was undertaken by the Jesuits of Belgium was simply theological; the Protestant world was to be overawed by this gigantic panorama of the life and effort and perpetuity of the Church which it defied. The task, however, fell into the hands of a man of real genius, and Bolland, with the school he formed, amongst which Papebroch and Janning were perhaps the most eminent, became, in the collection and revision of their multitudinous materials, and in the fearless and really scientific examination of the questions to which they led, the founders of historic criticism. The old spirit of undiscriminating reverence for antiquity vanished before the bolder scepticism of men who had started as the official defenders of tradition; the scientific criticism which swept away the forgeries of the Middle Ages was founded, and indeed almost perfected, by the genius of Mabillon and the wondrous industry of his brother Benedictines; while the vast series of chronicles which Muratori gathered in Italy, and Dom Bouquet in France, were

edited with a critical appreciation and a patient research which our own time finds it impossible to rival. The student who would learn the true method of dealing with historical materials will still learn best in the school of Bolland and Mabillon; but for the use of his materials he must look elsewhere. Voltaire, the strangest contrast which the world could afford to the sober, accurate, industrious scholars of St. Maur—trivial, superficial, self-satisfied even with his own ignorance, but with an intellectual range and a breadth of sympathy which was denied to them—was the first to point out the principles upon which history should be written, to free it from a mere bondage to details, and to call on it to describe the character of nations, and the moral, social, and intellectual advance of man. Hume is his English representative alike in his strength and his weakness; and it is the peculiar greatness of Gibbon that he was the first to fuse into one the excellences of both the historic schools which preceded him, and to combine the philosophic breadth of the sceptic of Ferney with the critical accuracy of a Benedictine of St. Maur. But the familiar instances of Hume or Gibbon show how much was yet wanting to the construction of a true theory of history. It is easy for us to smile when the one sneers at the great rising of 1640 as a quarrel over money-bags, or when the other tickets off under so many perfectly natural and reasonable headings the causes of the success of the Christian religion. But in reality it

required no less a shock than the French Revolution to turn men's eyes from the mere appreciation of the outer aspects of national or political life to a perception of the spiritual forces from which these mere outer phenomena proceed. History shared in the change that passed over poetry, over art, over music: in the startling advance from Pope to Wordsworth, from Gainsborough to Turner, from Haydn to Beethoven. Man, and the spiritual world which is within and around man; those impalpable sentiments and aspirations after liberty and brotherhood at which the philosophers of the last century had sneered as superstitious, but which the wreck of a whole political and social system had shown to be the deepest and strongest of realities; those eternal principles of moral consciousness which this great revolt against wrong and falsehood triumphantly asserted—the principles of justice and truth—these were henceforth to form the groundwork and basis of the history of nations. We do not purpose, of course, to attempt to describe what has been the actual result of this great movement on history in the great historic schools to which it has given birth in Germany and France, or in its effects upon ourselves. Its real value lies in the true foundation which it affords for all historic effort, and in the tests which it enables us to apply to each historic work. Great, for instance, as is the effort of Lord Macaulay after accuracy and justice, undeniable as is the poetic insight of Mr. Froude, one cannot but feel how the

real life of the people has escaped the constitutional and political research of the one, and how those deeper principles on which all hope of human progress rests are caricatured by the sentimentalism of the other. A keen perception of individual life, a broad philosophic view of human and national progress, a cool unbiassed truthfulness in the examination of documents and the narrative of events,—these are the essential conditions of historical study, and it is on the possession or absence of these qualities that the criticism of any historical work must be based.

Of all the periods of our history, that of the Norman Conquest has been the least fortunate in its treatment. Till the time of Thierry it was described as the beginning of a new England ; the ages before it were slighted as ages of a race as strange to us as the Britons whom they swept away—of a race whose name and language had vanished even more utterly than theirs. Indeed the idea of their existence having anything to do with our own would have sounded ridiculous to all but a few legal and constitutional antiquaries, whose Whig and Tory battle-ground had gradually drifted back from the Parliament of Edward to the Witenagemot of Ethelred. Thierry for the first time grasped the fact that this unknown and despised race were in reality Englishmen, of the same blood and tongue with the Englishmen of to-day ; but even his acuteness was misled, partly by the false analogy of the history of France, and partly by the subtle power of

names, into an error just as fatal to any right understanding of the event he undertook to describe. By exaggerating the differences and prolonging the social severance between conqueror and conquered, he converted our whole subsequent history, even to the Great Rebellion, into a warfare between "Saxon and Norman." To correct Thierry, and to write the true history of the Conquest, became next the aim of Sir Francis Palgrave, the one man whose daring originality of mind, controlled as it was by an intimate knowledge of facts, promised most for its treatment; but the energies of Sir Francis were wasted on the earlier history of the Norman Duchy, and though the reader is brought to the very verge of the Conquest, the Conquest remained unwritten. Literally speaking, it remains unwritten still. The volume which Mr. Freeman has laid before the public is simply an introduction to the great task before him, ending as it does with the story of our Danish kings, but enough has already been done to justify the author in undertaking this great subject. Not least among the merits of the book are its purely literary qualities. We miss here and there, indeed, the gift of picturesque narrative which Thierry so eminently possessed, or the weird fantastic beauties which alternated with as fantastic absurdities in the style of Sir Francis. We could occasionally spare a page of argumentative controversy to make room for a touch of that inner poetry of life which rarely finds expression save on Mr. Freeman's battle-

fields; and the keen appreciation of historical analogies and differences, which is among his greatest merits, sometimes leads the author away into dissertations which, instructive as they are in themselves, give a fitful and spasmodic appearance to the actual flow of the story. But the bold, clear, nervous English of the book is throughout in admirable harmony with the clear definite treatment of its subject, the precision with which it expresses the principles on which its author works, and the vigour with which he works them out. Not less remarkable is Mr. Freeman's command over the enormous mass of facts which he has laid under contribution.

The book is a perfect mine of learning on the subject which it treats. With one single exception, of which we shall speak presently, its author has explored every source—English or foreign, civil or ecclesiastical—from which information could be drawn. The reader feels throughout that he is in the hands of an historian who is unconsciously treating the revolutions of England as a part of the history of the world, and that he is as thoroughly master of the wider subject as he is of the narrower. But Mr. Freeman, we repeat, is thoroughly master of his facts, numerous as they are; the notes to the book, the abundance of which in a literary point of view is less defensible, enable us to judge of the rigid criticism to which each authority has been subjected. Some of his comments, indeed, are models of keen historical investigation; and in one remarkable instance—his

criticism of the Northern historians in their relation to our own—he has made a memorable contribution to the history of the time. The same clearness and self-command appear in the plan and structure of the book itself, in the arrangement of this mass of materials, and in the definiteness of the author's purpose. Nothing can be better in fact or style than the passage in which he lays down the aim and limits of his work —what, in a word, the Conquest did, and what it did not do :—

> What the Constitution was under Eadgar, that it remained under William. . . . The changes in the social condition of the country, the change in the spirit of the national and local administration, the change in the relation of the kingdom to foreign lands, were changes as great as words can express. But formal constitutional change there was none. I cannot too often repeat, for the saying is the summing up of the whole history, that the Norman Conquest was not the wiping out of the Constitution, the laws, the language, the natural life of Englishmen. . . . No event is less fit to be taken, as it too often has been taken, for the beginning of our national history. For its whole importance is not the importance which belongs to a beginning, but the importance which belongs to a turning-point. The Norman Conquest brought with it a most extensive foreign infusion which affected our blood, our language, our laws, our arts ; still, it was only an infusion ; the older and stronger elements still survived, and in the long run they again made good their supremacy. . . . The most important of the formal changes in legislation, in language, in the system of government, and in the tenure of land were no immediate consequences of the Conquest, no mere innovations of the reign of William. They were the developements of a later age, when the Norman as well as the Englishman found himself under the yoke of a foreign master. The distinct changes in law and government which we commonly attribute to William the

Norman belong in truth in by far the greatest number of cases to his great-grandson, Henry the Angevin.

We have quoted this passage, not because we wholly agree with its close, for we believe the civil policy of Henry the Angevin to have been a mere resumption and carrying out of the ideas of his grandfather, Henry the Peaceful, and it would be difficult to draw any deep line between the Conqueror and his son; but because the great truth of the constitutional identity of England before and after the Conquest has seldom been so clearly expressed or so definitely laid down as the groundwork of our history. To the growth and nature of that constitution Mr. Freeman has devoted the finest section of his first volume—a section which adds little indeed, as the author modestly confesses, to what has been before laid down by Kemble or Palgrave, but whose merits will be best appreciated by those who have striven to shape any connected whole out of the half-antiquarian dissertations of the Saxons in England, or who have hunted for any single point through the chaotic pages of the English Commonwealth. In the outset of his sketch indeed, we cannot but think that Mr. Freeman has under-estimated the influence of Roman ideas on the new society which sprang up on the wreck of them. However terrible a conflict the war between the invader and the provincial may have been, the conqueror had in fact to settle himself in a Roman province, not in a new country; and folc-land and boc-land, or the tenure by military service, may

rather have been inherited from the older system than copied—as in the last case Mr. Freeman suggests —from the mere analogy of its institutions. No theory, however, can dispel the darkness of our earlier annals in default of evidence, and evidence there is none. But the growth of the English polity as it emerges into historic light, is traced step by step with singular definiteness and accuracy, whether in its outer aspects—the local marks clustering into shires, the shires into kingdoms, the kingdoms into the empire of Britain—or in its inner revolutions, the simultaneous development of the civil and military distinctions of society, of the eorl and ceorl, the lord and thegn, till, through the gradual supersession of the one by the other, the old free Teutonic community is launched on the road to feudalism.

Side by side with the growth of England went on the growth of that wonderful people which was destined to its conquest. Its characteristics are described in the most eloquent passage of the book :—

> They were the Saracens of Christendom, spreading themselves over every corner of the world, and appearing in almost every character. They were the foremost in devotion, the most fervent votaries of their adopted creed, the most lavish in gifts to holy places at home, the most unwearied in pilgrimages to holy places abroad. . . . And they were no less the foremost in war. North, south, and east, the Norman lances were lifted; and they were lifted in the most opposite of causes. If the Norman fought by the side of Romanos at Manzikert, he threatened the Empire of Alexios with destruction at Dyrrhachion. His conquests brought with them the most opposite results in different lands. To free England he gave a line of

tyrants ; to enslaved Sicily he gave a line of beneficent rulers. But to England he gave also a conquering nobility which in a few generations became as truly English in England as it had become French in Normandy. . . . In the arts of peace, like his Mahomedan prototypes, he invented nothing; but he learned, adopted, and improved everything. He ransacked Europe for scholars, poets, theologians, and artists. . . . Art under his auspices produced alike the stern grandeur of Caen and Ely, and the brilliant gorgeousness of Palermo and Monreale. In a word, the indomitable vigour of the Scandinavian, joined to the buoyant vivacity of the Gaul, produced the conquering and ruling race of Europe.

It is, we fear, this strange influence of the Norman race over its historians, as well as over the Sicilian or the Englishman, which has misled Mr. Freeman, as in still greater measure it misled Sir Francis Palgrave, into a treatment of the history of the Duchy on a scale far larger than its real bearing on our own at all warrants. "In order thoroughly to understand the Norman Conquest of England, it is almost as needful to have a clear view of the condition and earlier history of Normandy as it is to have a clear view of the condition and early history of England." The character of the conquerors, the ideas and policy, the aims and prejudices they brought with them, form of course one of the principal elements in the history of the Conquest. But we fail to see how any knowledge of this character or of its formation is gained from the annals of the Duchy, or from the wearisome meddlings of its dukes with the perplexed politics of France. The silent change which transformed the Scandinavian into a Frenchman remains

as obscure as before, and the work has not yet reached that great era of diffusion when, penetrating everywhere, the Norman became the populariser, as it were, of all the greater ideas of the world. There is evidently a powerful attraction for Mr. Freeman in the outer aspects of war and policy which throughout tends to lead him away from the examination of those deeper questions which lie beneath them. His book is not, we think, sufficiently penetrated with the conviction of the superiority of man in himself to all the outer circumstances that surround him. We are, of course, far from classing the *History of the Norman Conquest* with the mere "drum and trumpet histories" which Dr. Shirley so pungently denounced, but throughout there is too much of wars and witenagemots, and too little of the life, the tendencies, the sentiments of the people. And this is the more remarkable because, as Mr. Freeman so clearly puts it, it was just these, and not the constitutional outside of English existence, that the Conquest so powerfully affected. The social condition and progress of the nation Mr. Freeman has reserved till he can deal with it from the basis of the Domesday book. But on the religious and intellectual life of Englishmen before the Conquest he is as silent as on the social, and it is remarkable that the one class of authorities on which he seems to have bestowed little attention is just the class from which alone we can derive any knowledge of the deeper feelings of their time; we mean the hagiologies. Yet even on so

tempting a subject as the extent of the old Northumbrian kingdom we find no reference to Cuthbert, whose life and preaching brings home the facts to us better than a thousand dissertations. Throughout, we may say, the subject of the Church is treated in a manner very unequal to its real importance and bearing on the development of England and its institutions. Whatever may be its defects, however, the merits of the work are great and incontestable. It takes rank at once as the most learned and the ablest of all the narratives of our earlier history. In its firm grasp and unflinching application of the true principles of historic criticism, in the clearness with which it defines the true nature of our national development, it has laid down a groundwork for after historians such as we have never had before. It is to these great features that we have now confined ourselves; of the detail of the story, especially in its narrative of the later years of the West-Saxon monarchy and the reign of the Danish kings, we hope to speak in a subsequent notice.

II

(1867)

In our previous notice of Mr. Freeman's book we confined ourselves chiefly to the general sketch of our earlier history and Constitution which forms the first half of this introductory volume. The second portion is of a more purely historic character, and is treated in a more purely historic way. The story of our Danish kings is indeed a real addition to our knowledge of this portion of our annals. It is not merely that Mr. Freeman has been the first to realise the importance of the rule of King Cnut, and his sons Harold and Harthacnut, as a prelude to the Norman Conquest which he has to tell; it is that he may fairly claim to be the first to have brought out the full interest of the time in itself. No one before has told as it deserved to be told the story of the desperate rally of England under Eadmund Ironside; no one has brought out the strangely attractive character of Cnut; nowhere certainly has any attempt been made to give meaning or importance to the reigns of his successors. Without committing ourselves wholly to his conclusions, it is bare justice to Mr. Freeman to say that he is the first who has brought to light a forgotten chapter of English history, and that he has done it with a breadth and vividness of treatment which effectually secures it from ever being forgotten again.

We are not saying that in his narrative of the reigns of these Danish kings the historian has, in our opinion, fully grasped the meaning of the period which he has treated, or that he has satisfactorily solved its numberless difficulties. The importance, in fact, that he attaches to the artificial kingdom which the genius of Ælfred's successors built up, would alone stand in the way of any right understanding of the events that produced or followed on its dissolution. The truth is that till the reign of the Conqueror, whatever shape its outer political arrangements might assume, England was not one kingdom, but three or two kingdoms. Wessex, Mercia, and Northumbria remained separate political bodies, which no efforts of force or policy could really fuse into one. Their relation was of course greatly modified by the Danish settlement of the north. The distinction between Mercia and Northumbria, for instance, was almost done away; or, to put it more accurately, Mercia was divided into two parts, of which the northern became purely Danish and fused into Northumbria; while the southern, under its Ealdormen, exhibits its old local character of mediator between north and south only intensified by the mixture of population which now gave it kinship with either. But these modifications of provincial differences by the addition of a difference of race increased the difficulty, which every great statesman of the time had to encounter, of holding this varied England together under the supremacy of the royal line of Wessex. They really solved it by

basing the power and policy of England not on the south but on the north; but such a solution, if it satisfied the Danelagh, was hardly likely to be acceptable to the old and fast-waning kingdom of Ecgbert and Ælfred. The cardinal error of Mr. Freeman's treatment of this latter period seems to us to lie in his steady identification of England with Wessex—of West-Saxon provincialism with English patriotism. The facts point the other way: again and again it is the selfish provincialism of Wessex which ruins all hope of national union as Dunstan or Eadgar would have built it up. It was against the abandonment of the policy of the first by the West-Saxon Eadwig that Mercia and Northumbria rose in arms to replace the great Minister and to set their own ruler on the throne. In that great revolution lies the key to the after-history of the realm, and for the hour its import could not but be understood. The submission of Wessex before the two kingdoms under Eadgar is but repeated in her submission to them under Sweyn. England's real strength lay to the north of Thames, if the tradition of sovereignty lingered to the south of it, and it was Eadgar's steady appreciation of this that forms the chief element in the glory of his reign, as, in the form of a partiality for the Danes, it was the one charge which Wessex could bring against him. But the policy of Eadgar died with him. The murder of Eadward the Martyr, the succession of Æthelred, bears every mark of a political revolution. The "great joy of the English

Witan" which the Chronicle so expressly notices, the retirement of Dunstan and his presaging words of ill to come, the futile attempt—which must have come from the north—to set up a rival, the immediate resumption of Danish hostility, all point to the success of a West-Saxon reaction in the elevation of Æthelred. It is on Wessex, and for a long time on Wessex only, that the invasions and ravages of the Northmen fall; East Anglia alone—which seems to have had some special connection with Wessex—stirs a finger in its defence. It was not so much the imbecility of Æthelred as the practical secession of England north of the Thames which paralysed the struggle against the Dane. And when Northern England passed from inactivity to active effort, the struggle was over in a moment. It was not Sweyn, but Northumbria and Mercia, which had risen as one man when his ships appeared, doubtless by invitation, in the Humber, that crushed the resistance of Wessex in a single march, and swept Æthelred away to Normandy. He returns, when the sudden death of his conqueror had again freed Wessex, to occupy the same provincial position; for if Mr. Freeman regards his recall as a national act, the people of Lindsey, whose homes he had harried with fire and sword on his return, were not likely to mistake him for more than a West-Saxon. The battles of Eadmund Ironside were, with one exception, purely West-Saxon battles; it was the election of Cnut that first restored—as he himself claimed to have restored

—the system of Eadgar, and gave a lasting peace to the realm.

We will not pursue the subject further, though much might be adduced in support of this view from the reigns of Harold and Harthacnut. But it is impossible not to see what a fresh light it flings upon the character of the statesmen of the day who, as they fall under the censure of the Chronicle, fall equally under the lash of Mr. Freeman. But, as he himself confesses, it is easier to censure than to understand them. If it be true that the career of a man who played so prominent a part in English politics as Eadric "is simply a catalogue of treasons as unintelligible as those of his predecessor" Ælfric; if, again, "the very success of his villanies" (the words might apply to either) "shows that he must have somehow or other obtained the lead of a considerable party"; if, after the most outrageous treasons, men such as these can still retain influence with the kings they betray, and sway (as Eadric did after Assandun) the counsels of the Witan in the very freshness of their treachery,—then it is not merely the character of Eadric or Ælfric that is unintelligible, it is the whole history of the country and the time. What in our judgment these men really attempted, what among all their strange changes from side to side England, her kings, and her Witan seem to have understood them to be attempting, was the restoration of that system of political balance which, alike in the elections of Eadwig and Æthelred, Wessex had swept away.

And in the pursuit of this policy they do not stand by themselves; they are but two in a line of great statesmen which begins with Dunstan and ends with Godwine. Dunstan's own party, with his successor Sigeric at their head—that clerical party which in these obscure times gives us the best clue to the true national sentiment—led the way in the policy of purchasing peace which is visited so heavily on the head of Ælfric. But the position of these two Ministers, Ælfric and Eadric, is, it must be remembered, determined not merely by the older traditions of English statesmanship, but by their connection with the province which specially represented the system of compromise as opposed to that of West-Saxon supremacy. Both were Ealdormen of English Mercia, and the choice of their province accurately represents the character of their policy. Like Lord Halifax they were trimmers, and they have received the usual reward of trimmers, but they trimmed from causes far deeper than the sentimental attraction towards minorities which distinguished the statesman of the seventeenth century. Tortuous as their policy might seem in details, it was perfectly intelligible in its broad outlines; and with all the facts fresh before them which have come down to us distorted by legend and hate, the men of their own day gathered to their standard and bowed to their counsel. But it is the historic curse which rests upon heroes that to write them up it is commonly necessary to write other men down; and if Archbishop Sigeric

and Ealdorman Ælfric are sacrificed to the theory which identifies England with Wessex, Eadric is ruthlessly immolated on the altar of the glory of Eadmund Ironside. We will not affect to regret that Mr. Freeman has for once bowed the head before a hero, for however great a mistake the struggle of Eadmund may have been politically, it carries with it the real heroic charm, and it is painted in words as spirit-stirring as the deeds they tell. Take such a battle-picture as this of the fight at Assandun, where the King's wonderful seven months of victory end in ruinous defeat. The retreat of the Danes has led them along the high ground which lies south of the Crouch, by the Essex coast:—

Along these heights Eadmund followed them, and at last overtook and engaged them in the sixth and last battle of this wonderful year, the memorable fight of Assandun. At the extremity of the range two hills of slight positive elevation, but which seem of considerable height in the low country in the East of England, look down on the swampy plain watered by the tidal river. Between the hills and this lowest ground lies a considerable level at an intermediate height, which seems to have been the actual site of the battle. Of the two hills, one still retains the name of Ashington, an easy corruption of the ancient form; while the other, in its name of Canewdon, perhaps preserves the memory of the Danish conqueror himself. On Assandun, then, a site marked by entrenchments which are possibly witnesses of that day's fight, possibly of yet earlier warfare, Eadmund drew up his forces in three ranks, and at first seemed disposed to await the attack of the enemy. The King took the post which immemorial usage fixed for a royal general between the two ensigns which were displayed over an English army, the golden dragon, the national ensign of Wessex, and the standard, seemingly the personal device of the

King. The moment was favourable for battle; the Raven fluttered her wings, and Thurkill, overjoyed at the auspicious omen, called for immediate action. But Cnut, young as he was, was wary, and would fight only after his own fashion. He gradually led his troops off the hills into the level ground, that is, the intermediate height between the hills and the swampy plain. The main object of Eadmund was to cut off the Danes from their ships; he had therefore no choice but to leave his strong post and to descend to the lower ground. . . . Accordingly, he began the battle with a furious assault upon the Danes; he even forsook the royal post, and, charging sword in hand in the first rank, burst like a thunderbolt upon the ranks of the enemy. The Danes resisted manfully, and the fight was kept up with equal valour and with terrible slaughter on both sides. On the whole the Danes had the worst, and they were beginning to give way when Eadric again betrayed his lord and king and all the people of English kin. . . . The battle, however, was kept up till sunset, and even by the light of the moon, but after the flight of Eadric the English had to maintain the struggle on very unequal terms. All England fought against Cnut, but Cnut had the victory.

It is hard, after a glowing passage like this, to return to the colder colours of historic fact. But the whole story of Eadmund, as Mr. Freeman gives it, is primarily built on Florence of Worcester, and as far as the story of Eadmund is concerned, Florence is but an unscrupulous expansion of the Chronicle into legend. The earlier and more curious part of the hero's history indeed remains untouched. While Æthelred still lived, it seems to have been the intention of Eadmund to resume the older policy of his house; by a political marriage he established some sort of lordship over the five Danish boroughs along Trent, and hastened at the head of a Northumbrian

and Mercian force to meet Cnut, to whose arms his new policy had abandoned Wessex without defence. The attempt, however, failed, and on his father's death Eadmund, rejected by England, sank into a king of Wessex. It was with West-Saxon armies that he held the border of his shrunken realm at Pen and Sherstone against the attempts of Cnut, whom the whole English nation, save the few faithful nobles gathered round Eadmund in London, had chosen for their national king. But he could do no more than hold Wessex till the junction of Eadric brought him the support of what the Chronicle from that time calls "all England." Whatever was the immediate cause of Eadric's passing over from Cnut to Eadmund, whether it was the cause or result of a revulsion of popular feeling, it changed the face of affairs at once. Eadmund was able to push forth to the relief of London—the one ally left him outside his realm—to harass the besiegers at Brentford, and when they broke up the siege from want of food, to fall on their dispersed parties in Mercia and Kent. The Danes had withdrawn to Essex, and there, as we have seen, Eadmund overtook them to lose all in one frightful defeat. The defeat was attributed to the flight of Eadric, but the voice of Eadric is first in the Witan which now insists on the compromise which has become inevitable. Wessex remains to Eadmund; the rest of England passes to Cnut. A little time more and the sudden death of his rival leaves Cnut master of all. Over all this simple record of a gallant struggle, as

the Chronicle gives it, Florence has thrown the exaggeration and distortion of legend. "He fought against the armies at Pen" becomes a victorious rout of the Danes. Sherstone, where "much slaughter was made on either side, and the armies of themselves separated," is amplified into a two days' struggle, from which the Danes fly under cover of the night, and in which Eadric plays the inevitable traitor with a false head of Eadmund in his hand. But this is nothing to the unscrupulous perversion of the great defeat at Assandun, where the Chronicle's simple "Then did Eadric the ealdorman, as he had often done before, begin the flight first with the Magesaetas, and so betrayed his lord the king and the English people," becomes an elaborate story of a promise of treachery made to Cnut and fulfilled in the very instant of English success. Mr. Freeman, we must own, feels none of our distrust of Florence; he follows him without a murmur from Pen to Assandun, but at the close of the last encounter he wakes up to a faint protest, which might, under less exciting circumstances than this great battle-period supplies, have led to a wider incredulity. When the prim monk spoils the Chronicle's "there were slain Abbot Eadnoth and Abbot Wulfsige" by his pious little addition, "both of whom had come to pray for the soldiers while they were fighting," "I confess," says Mr. Freeman, "that the calm way in which the Chronicles reckon the Prelates among the slain alongside of the Ealdormen looks to me the other way."

But the perversion which best illustrates Florence's way of going to work is passed over without comment. Mr. Freeman rightly adopts the Chronicle's narrative of the events that followed Assandun: "then advised Eadric and the Witan who were there that the kings should be reconciled." But Florence saw that to give such a position to Eadric at the head of the Witan was to falsify his story of a covenanted treachery at Assandun. Since the days of Demosthenes men have learnt that a politician may run away from the field of battle without necessarily doing so from sheer treason. But the flight of panic and that of treachery are easily distinguishable, and the Witan and Eadmund himself were hardly likely to be following the lead of a traitor of a week's standing, through whose treason the hill of Assandun was covered with English dead. Whatever patience policy might have dictated, the memory of that corpse-strewn hill would have made patience impossible. So Eadmund is made to be very indignant at the proposal of peace, and the Witan of the Chronicle are turned into a contemptuous "quidam alii."

The immediate result of the death of Eadmund Ironside was the establishment of a Danish monarchy, whose effect in preparing England for her Norman masters, and in bringing forward the great men whose names stand foremost in the history of the Conquest, is admirably explained by Mr. Freeman in the last chapters of his work. The result by which it most affects us, perhaps, is the transference of the

capital, which it in the long run brought about, from Winchester to London. The history of London is so well illustrated in Mr. Freeman's pages that we wonder at his omitting to notice the new position the great city assumes when, through the influx of Danish citizens, it became the chosen residence of Harold the First. It was no accident that he was buried, first of our kings, at Westminster, or that his ejected corpse was again buried in the London cemetery of St. Clement Danes. But of this, no doubt, there will be more to tell when the New Minster of the Confessor tells us that the old capital of the Kings of Wessex is definitely forsaken. Full as the last chapters are of interest, we must leave them without comment. The best close of a notice which has been almost exclusively concerned with Eadmund Ironside will be the eloquent words of Mr. Freeman's farewell to the hero-King of Wessex:—

> The uninterrupted succession of the West-Saxon kings had now come to an end. The remains of the last and one of the noblest of that great line were carried to the common sanctuary of Briton and Englishman, and the body of Eadmund Ironside was laid by that of his grandfather Eadgar in the great minster of Glastonbury. In later times, through all the reconstructions of that wonderful pile, the memory of the hero of Sherstone and Assandun still lived. Till men arose in whose eyes art, history, and religion were alike worthless, he held a worthy place among a galaxy of royal tombs which Winchester or Westminster could hardly surpass. Behind the high altar in his own chapel as a canonised saint rested the body of Eadgar the Peaceful. Before the altar lay the supposed remains of the legendary Arthur, and his still more legendary queen. North

and south slept two champions of England alike in name and glory. On the north side lay Eadmund the Magnificent, one of the brother heroes of Brunanburh, the conqueror of Scot and Cumbrian and Northman, the deliverer of English cities from the heathen yoke. To the south lay his namesake and descendant, as glorious in defeat as in victory, the more than equal rival of the glorious Cnut, the man who raised England from the lowest depth of degradation, the guardian whose heart and arm never failed her, even if his ear lent too easy credence to the counsels of the traitor.

III

(1868)

THE double title[1] of Mr. Freeman's second volume points fairly enough to a double interest which it possesses. In itself it is a narrative of the reign of Eadward the Confessor, a period which, like the preceding era of the Danish kings, Mr. Freeman may fairly claim to have restored to English history. As a part of his story of the Conquest it enables us to see at once the scope and plan of the work he has undertaken. The year of Hastings and the coronation of William forms naturally the centre of the narrative. A volume will be devoted to the after reign of the Conqueror, as the present one is devoted to that preliminary struggle between Norman and Englishman which forms the eve of the Conquest. In addition to these, a supplementary summary of

[1] *History of the Norman Conquest of England.* Reign of Eadward the Confessor.

the general results of that great event will form a parallel to the introduction which has already detailed its causes. The plan is a large and admirable one, and thus far the execution is quite equal to the design. We miss in the present volume many of the less agreeable characteristics of the first. There is less talk and more business. We have fewer of those elaborate dissertations on disputed points which, like Lord Macaulay's similar disquisitions, are so painfully convincing that they harden us against being convinced. In their place we have a story new to all but professed historians, a story of great men and great events, told with a power of realisation, an intimate knowledge of the time, a sympathy with the actors in it, a zeal and eloquence which leave little to be desired. The style remains as before, clear, definite, precise, though wanting in the subtler qualities of grace and flexibility which make words the echoes of every phase of feeling which the narrative may excite. But in more than one passage Mr. Freeman has given evidence of a power of picturesque description of which the preceding volume afforded little promise. The march of Godwine on Gloucester could hardly be better told than in his words.

Godwine is the great figure of the opening of this book, as Harold is the great figure of its close. The atmosphere of mere fable through which ages have viewed alike the father and son is replaced, in Mr. Freeman's volume, by a clear and accurate study of

two of the most remarkable of English administrations. Above all, the statesman in whose hands the cessation of the Danish rule left the fortunes of the realm, the restorer of the line of Alfred, the virtual governor of England through the earlier period of Edward's rule, stands at last clear in historic light. It is impossible to estimate too highly the patient labour, the sound criticism, the large research into the annals of Lorraine and the North as well as our own national chronicles, by which this restoration of a great Minister has been effected, or the full justice which is thus for the first time done to the ability of his rule, to his vigilant guardianship of the realm, to his stern enforcement of the public peace, to the hold he obtained on national feeling, to the eloquence with which he swayed the deliberations of the Witan. It is perhaps inevitable that a little more than full justice should here and there be done. In the summary of the Earl's character, with which he closes the account of his life, Mr. Freeman has risen into an impassioned rhetoric in ranking him with the highest names among the patriots and statesmen of our history. But eloquent as the panegyric is, we own to a preference for the cooler estimate of Godwine's character which runs through the impartial narrative of the events in which he figured. "Godwine," to quote Mr. Freeman's calmer judgment,

> Godwine was essentially a wary statesman, and in no sense a chivalrous hero. We have seen that mighty as was the

power of his eloquence he did not trust to his eloquence only. He knew how to practise the baser as well as the nobler arts of statesmanship. He knew how to win over political adversaries by bribes, threats, and promises, and how to find means of chastisement for those who remained to the last immovable by the voice of the charmer. When we think of the vast extent of his possessions, most or all of which must have been acquired by royal grant, it is almost impossible to acquit him of a grasping disposition.

It is to minds of this lower moral type that Providence often entrusts the guidance of peoples in times of quiet revolution. The cool prudence, the sensitive selfishness, the want of enthusiasm, the quiet perception of what is possible, the unscrupulous adroitness of men like Godwine, or Cecil, or Palmerston, fit them admirably for the administration of affairs in transitional periods of national history. But it is an utter misuse of words to call such men great, and such phrases as the "Great Earl" and the like are, now that we can judge Godwine fairly, something worse than errors of enthusiasm. He had, indeed, as the two statesmen we have named with him had, a real love for England. He had, like them, a singular dexterity in the management of men and of affairs, great vigilance, industry, and caution. But he was utterly without moral or intellectual height. There was an element of petty selfishness about him that robbed him in his lifetime even of the credit that he had fairly earned. His civil government was just and effective, yet he suffered sheer greed for family aggrandisement to alienate from him the sympathies

of two-thirds of the realm. His foreign policy was skilful and adroit, yet in the crisis of his life he had to witness its unanimous condemnation by his countrymen. As the representative of patriotic feeling he towered high over the King and his Court, but so startling were the abuses of his ecclesiastical administration that he transferred the power of all moral superiority to Edward and his Normans. He seems to have been unable to discern any of the deeper tendencies of his time, or to grasp more than the most superficial indications of popular feeling. With all his shrewdness he had suffered an anti-national party to take root in the land, and when one really just and patriotic act roused them into hostility he found that at the noblest moment of his life he stood alone. The panic of his flight, the hesitations of his return, show the same commonplace temper; the very stigma which his enemies attached to his deathbed, false as it is, is not the sort of stigma which men dare to fix on a man really great.

But if Godwine cannot be classed in the first rank of statesmen, he proved himself an admirable administrator of public affairs in an age of transition. Throughout the reign of the Confessor, England was unconsciously drifting into new relations to the Church and to Christendom. The Conquest was only the forcible hurrying on of the gradual process which was bringing England into harmony with the general system of Western Europe; and, blind as

statesmen like Godwine are to the real tendencies of the times in which they live, he had the tact which enables his class to accommodate themselves quietly to the changing relations of the world around them. The foreign policy of Eadward's reign, so admirably illustrated in Mr. Freeman's book, brings this out with singular clearness. Under the Danish kings, England had formed, as it were, a part of Scandinavia; her perils, her wars, her alliances, the sovereignty of her rulers had knit her exclusively to the kingdoms of Northern Europe, and made their revolutions her own. The accession of Eadward was far from changing her political relations. The throne of the Confessor was menaced by the claims of Magnus of Norway—claims supported, as Mr. Freeman hints, by a Danish party within the realm of which Osgod Clapa was a type. It was on the North that Godwine's eye was fixed by his early training, by his traditions of statesmanship, and by the alliances of his house. While from time to time he cruised along the coast with a fleet strong enough to meet the possible invader, his hand is seen keeping up a system of political balance between the rival Powers of the North. It was in the very crisis of this Scandinavian policy that he suddenly found himself at issue with English feeling. However wise and statesmanlike his plans may seem, the feeling of the people had drifted away from the North, and the whole Witan followed Leofric in rejecting Godwine's proposal to meddle with its revolutions.

Nothing throws a more remarkable light on the character of Godwine than this unconscious drifting of people and statesmen away from each other, but it is no less significant that the old policy seems from that moment to have been utterly abandoned, and that no trace of it appears in the after administration of the heir of Godwine's statesmanship as well as of his name. The hand of Harold is ever stretched out to Lorraine and the Empire, but till Tostig flings the sword of Hardrada into the balance, we hear little of the North.

Mr. Freeman has naturally devoted most time and labour to the grander incidents of the revolution which first overthrew and then restored the power of Earl Godwine than to the causes of it. But it is impossible to ascribe it simply, or even chiefly, to the influence of the Norman favourites of Eadward. High as their official dignities placed them in mere political rank, they were without any real hold on the realm, and when their English friends forsook them at the Earl's return, they fell without a blow. What really overthrew Godwine was the moral indignation of nine-tenths of the realm. Mr. Freeman is far from defending the scandalous traffic which the Earl carried on in the higher Church preferment, but he fails to point out the position in which it placed him in an age which, whether in England or in Normandy, was slowly rising to a higher conception of spiritual things. Siward and Leofric were on this point at one with Eadward or

Duke William, that in some dim way they bowed—either by the outer signs of benefactions for religious purposes, or by superstitious piety, or by a stricter administration of Church patronage—to the growing moral sense about them. Godwine alone stood utterly untouched by the great movement; the founder of no religious house, the plunderer, as the monks asserted, of many, the patron of the most daring violation of morality and religion that that age had seen. It is hard to doubt that it was the outrage of Swegen at Leominster, added to the brutal murder of his cousin, that roused against Godwine and his house an indignation which all his greed and ambition would never have provoked. The scandalous inlawing of the criminal was a direct insult to the moral sense of the realm. The expulsion of the whole house followed quickly on it, and the renewal of Swegen's outlawry is one of the first acts of the Witan after their expulsion. It is in the slight notice he bestows on these moral causes for Godwine's overthrow that we think Mr. Freeman does injustice to something greater than Godwine. England went with Leofric and Siward in their refusal to support any longer a system of government which contradicted all its higher and nobler instincts. The flight of the great Minister to Flanders was an emphatic declaration that the Northern spirit of lawless outrage and contempt of sacred things was henceforth banished from English soil. But the sentence was all that England asked. A year of

exile brought Godwine back, and the year had taught Englishmen that, faulty as he was, in him and in his house lay their hope of national independence. With the death of Godwine passed away the baser element of a character strangely compounded of good and ill; the nobler lived on in Harold.

For the incidents of this revolution we must refer our readers to the glowing pages of Mr. Freeman. The story is nobly told, and it is hard to retain critical coolness in face of the writer's enthusiasm. The outrage of Count Eustace, the march upon Gloucester as Mr. Freeman has given it, the hurried flight, the daring return, the panic-stricken rush of the Norman prelates through the streets of London, are vivid pictures that will not soon be forgotten. And if we have ventured to take a lower estimate of the chief actor in these great scenes than Mr. Freeman has taken, we cannot but close with the noble words of farewell which the historian lays upon his tomb:—

> To know what Godwine was we have but to cast away the fables of later days, to turn to the records of his own time, to see how he looked in the eyes of men who had seen and heard him, of men who had felt the blessings of his rule and whose hearts had been stirred by the voice of his mighty eloquence. No man ever deserved a higher or a more lasting place in national gratitude than the first man who, being neither king nor priest, stands forth in English history as endowed with all the highest attributes of the statesman. In him, in those distant times, we can revere the great Minister, the unrivalled Parliamentary leader, the man who could sway councils and assemblies at his will, and whose voice during five and thirty

years of political life was never raised in any cause but that of the welfare of England. Side by side with all that is worthiest in our later history — side by side with his own counterpart two ages afterwards, the second deliverer from the yoke of the stranger, the victor of Lewes, the martyr of Evesham — side by side with all who from his day to ours have in the field or in the senate struggled or suffered in the cause of English freedom — side by side with the worthies of the thirteenth and the worthies of the seventeenth century — will the voice of truthful history rising above the calumnies of ages place the name of the great deliverer of the eleventh, the Earl of happy memory, whose greatness was ever the greatness of England, whose life was one long offering to her welfare, and whose death came fittingly as the crown of that glorious life when he had once more given peace and freedom to the land which he loved so well.

IV

(1868)

THE death of Godwine in the very hour of his triumph bequeathed the direction of English affairs to his son, Earl Harold. It is the special merit of Mr. Freeman's elaborate researches into the later history of Eadward's reign that they bring home to us the fact that the man who in common narratives starts into rule for a single year, by his seizure of the Crown, had in reality been the ruler of England for twelve years before. The coronation of Harold was, as he fairly puts it, the natural climax of the life of one who at twenty-four years old "was invested with the rule of one of the great divisions

of England; who, seven years later, became the virtual ruler of the kingdom; who at last, twenty-one years from his first elevation, received, alone among English kings, the Crown of England as the free gift of her people." The obvious lesson of all this is a lesson which we cannot but think Mr. Freeman has too little remembered—that Harold can no longer be judged from the single standpoint of Senlac. The exaggerated declamation of his Norman opponents against the "usurper" and the "tyrant" of that memorable year, and the no less exaggerated declamation of his friends over the "patriot" and the "martyr" may, in forming any real estimate of his character and motives, be coolly set aside. The year of his great close is simply the last of an administration which extended over thirteen years; and it is the general tenor of that administration, rather than any isolated events in it, that must really give us the measure of Harold. He came to power, it must be remembered, unfettered by many of the obstacles that had beset his father. The revolution which had restored his house had freed him from the internal rivalry of a foreign party at the Court. The defeat of Macbeth and the elevation of a nominee of England to the Scottish throne removed all danger from the North. If any fears of a Danish reaction still lingered, they must have been removed by the death of Osgod Clapa. Siward and Leofric, the two formidable counterpoises to the power of his house, passed away in

the first years of his rule. Godwine had carried with him to his grave a thousand party resentments, gathered along a tortuous course of political intrigue. The one great moral obstacle that stood between England and his family had died with Swegen. None of the jealousy which Eadward displayed towards the supremacy of his first Minister seems to have displayed itself towards his second. For twelve years he was the undisputed governor of the realm. And this political supremacy was backed by high personal qualities.

We cannot give at length the elaborate panegyric of Harold, but we cannot but wish that in the stead of a panegyric Mr. Freeman had favoured us with a character. Hero-worshippers generally defeat their own object by lifting their heroes out of the sphere of human sympathies into a perfection that is simply uninteresting and unintelligible. Every one had some faint idea of Henry VIII. as a human being till Mr. Froude took and deified him. And though Mr. Freeman has chosen his hero better, at least from a moral point of view, he is no less a hero-worshipper than Mr. Froude. We deplore this, as we have said, for the sake of the hero. We should like to have gained as curious an insight into the character of Harold as Mr. Freeman gave us into the character of Godwine, but human interest stops short of the seventh heaven. Amidst all this enthusiastic worship the character of the Earl remains singularly obscure.

The very nature of his administration itself, during the greater part of it, is dark and mysterious. The three last years of it, indeed, are memorable enough — the years of the Welsh campaign, the expulsion of Tostig, the accession to the Crown; but the ten that precede them defy even the industry of Mr. Freeman. In 1059, for instance, "the Chronicles literally record nothing of greater importance than the fact that the steeple of Peterborough Minster was hallowed." It is this absence of important facts, we presume, that drives Mr. Freeman to one of the great blots on his book — the insertion of events of utter historic insignificance, simply because they are found in his authorities. This is pre-eminently the case in the matter of ecclesiastical appointments. "It is not of any special moment, as far as we know, when Heaca, Bishop of Selsey or of the South Saxons, died, and was succeeded by Athelric, a monk of Christchurch." We take Mr. Freeman's word for the unimportance of the event, but we wonder all the more why we hear of Bishop Heaca. Half the work of history, it seems to us, lies in the selection of facts, as the other half lies in the collection of them. The same absence of information tells, too, on the author's treatment of the events that he really has a right to mention—the exaggerated importance, for instance, which he attaches to the foundation of Waltham, or the ingenious speculations which he founds on the very doubtful passage of Earl Harold through France. In the kingdom of

the blind a one-eyed man is king, and in the dearth of big events little events loom into bigness. The passage of the biographer of Eadward — if he has any value at all—is indeed curious enough, but we doubt whether it points to any contemplated alliances with French princes with a view to mutual support against William. It seems to us to point rather to some project of Harold's for providing a refuge abroad, if, like his father, he was ever driven from the realm; and if any materials for a reply existed, it would be worth while questioning whether some such object as this was not present in his negotiations with Duke William himself. With the exception, however, of this doubtful voyage, it is notable that throughout the rule of Harold, England is without any foreign relations whatever; for the embassy to the Imperial Court in 1054 had a simply domestic purpose, and the nomination of a few Lotharingian bishops does not affect the really insular nature of his policy. Nor is this absence of outer relations compensated by any internal activity. Mr. Freeman marks, indeed, the predominance of ecclesiastical administration as the characteristic of this earlier period of Harold's rule; but when we look closer into the mass of details, there is simply no ecclesiastical administration whatever, no conspicuous synod, no great Church reform—nothing, in a word, but the appointment of a few prelates in the place of others, the attempted introduction of the rule of Chrodegang, and, so far as Harold him-

self is concerned, the foundation of a single religious house. Mr. Freeman is right in pointing out the secular nature of this foundation of Waltham, but we are amazed at the large deductions he draws from it. Harold's appointment of a schoolmaster is nothing very remarkable in itself; so far as we know, teaching was common to all the greater religious houses, regular or secular; and the tracing the existence of colleges up to this particular form of clerical existence is of about as much historic value as the tracing of pure academic teaching up to the Friars. Nor is it fair to lift Harold into a sort of Protestant hero by viewing the secular character of his house as a protest against monasticism. Whether —we do not say the mass of the secular clergy scattered in their cures over England, but — the secular clergy gathered in their snug prebendal houses round the minster at Waltham were, as Mr. Freeman puts it, a "more practically useful class" than the unfortunate monks who converted England, founded English literature and English education, reclaimed her wastes, and preserved her history, but who certainly omitted to use their "genuine Teutonic liberty" by marrying comfortably and leaving children behind them, may be doubted. But what cannot be doubted is, that something more than "the fashion of the age" looked on this particular class of the secular clergy as the constant plague and disgrace of the mediæval Church, and that in espousing the episcopal side against the regulars, Harold was at

issue, not with Dunstan and Lanfranc only, but with Alfred and Wulstan.

In his civil administration, as in his foreign or ecclesiastical, it is difficult to grasp any new or large conception in the mind of Harold, such as those which lift his Norman rival into greatness. Take him at his best, there is little more than a sort of moral conservatism, without a trace of genius or originality, or even any attempt at high statesmanship. Take him at his worst, and we can hardly fail to see a certain cunning and subtlety of temper that often coexists with mediocrity of intellectual gifts. In the internal government of the realm he simply follows out his father's policy, while avoiding his father's excesses. For one great political scandal he is solely responsible. It may not have been with a deliberate purpose of neutralising the great constitutional check on an English king that he allowed the highest dignity of the English Church to remain throughout his rule in a state of suspension. But if we acquit him of a purpose which would be a crime, it can only be on the plea of an indifference to the relations of Church and State, which, like Talleyrand's blunder, was even worse than a crime. In all other respects, his civil administration during his first ten years of rule is the mere continuation of his father's. There is the same scheme of family aggrandisement, carried out in even a less scrupulous way. To gain the paternal earldom of Wessex, indeed, Harold had been compelled to resign his own lordship of East

Anglia to the rival power of Mercia. But two years after, when he was firm in his saddle, and the death of Siward had added the North to the domain of his family, Harold dealt a sharp blow at the one house that held him in check. Mr. Freeman's treatment of the banishment of Earl Ælfgar in 1055, again reminds us of Mr. Froude's treatment of similar judicial difficulties in the life of his hero. There are but four accounts left of the matter, and of these, three agree in declaring the Earl guiltless, or nearly guiltless. The fourth, which avers that he publicly confessed his guilt, but that the confession escaped him unawares, is "that of the chronicler who is most distinctly a partisan of Harold's." We certainly cannot agree in the comment that "with such evidence as this we are not in a position to determine on the guilt or innocence of Ælfgar"; nor do we think Harold's case is much bettered by the suggestion that "at any rate, if Ælfgar was not a traitor before his condemnation, he became one speedily after it." The Earl was forced, indeed, to consent to his victim's restoration; but when Leofric's death threw his father's earldom into his hands, he wrested back East Anglia, and girded Mercia round with the chain of the possessions of his house. It is impossible, in the absence of facts, to explain the change of policy that followed. It may have been that the house of Leofric, confined now to a few central counties of the realm, was no longer dangerous as a foe, and might be useful as a friend.

It may have been that Harold was jealous of the power of Tostig, and of his influence with the King. All that we know is, that Harold suddenly reversed his whole previous policy, and, in spite or in consequence of his brother's feud with the sons of Ælfgar, intermarried with their house. The marriage was quickly followed by the rising of Northumbria against its Earl, and the rising was clearly prompted by Mercian instigation. But was the instigation simply Mercian? Harold was now the fast friend of Eadwine and Morkere; the expulsion of Tostig removed the only possible rival to his hopes of the Crown; the division of Northumbria into two earldoms, so evidently stipulated as the price of Morkere's accession, told only to Harold's profit. It is certain that when the two brothers stood face to face, the charge was openly made that the revolt had been owing to the machinations of Harold. It is certain that the charge was so vehemently urged, and received so much credence, that Harold thought it needful to purge himself legally by oath. Anyhow, in spite of the violent opposition of the King, the royal Minister yielded every point to the insurgents, and his brother fled over sea. It is, we repeat, impossible from sheer dearth of information to disentangle the threads of this complicated web of intrigue and revolution, or to pronounce with any certainty on the character of Harold's course in the matter. If Harold was simply using England as a vast chessboard, and moving friends and foes in an

unscrupulous play for power, he was amply punished. The revenge of Tostig proved the ruin of Harold. The victory of Stamford Bridge was the prelude of the defeat of Senlac. The close of Harold's life may, in Mr. Freeman's hands, throw some light on the dim obscure years that he has sketched in the present volume. Even hero-worship can hardly err in its praises of that final struggle, and the critic who rates Harold lowest may own that there are supreme moments when even the commonplace gather grandeur ere they pass away. But the character of the man and of his rule is to be gathered, not from the hour of heroic struggle, but from the years that Mr. Freeman has told. A policy of mere national stagnation within and without sprang from the natural temper, the poverty of purpose, the narrowness of conception, of a mind which it is impossible to call great.

V

(1868)

William the Great, as men of his own day called him, William the Conqueror, as he stamped himself by one great event upon every English memory, is the third figure in the historic trilogy of the present volume. Mr. Freeman has nobly painted the mingled elements of his character, his indomitable will, his large yet patient statesmanship, his sensibility to the

nobler impulses of his age, his generosity, above all the greatness which lifts him in aim and result out of the mere incidents of his time. We have little doubt that, as his work goes on, the historian of the Conquest will reconsider the emphatic verdict he has passed by anticipation on the later rule of his hero; but for this, as for his character at large, we may wait till the close of the story. William's capacity indeed, as is the case with men of his intellectual pre-eminence, seems to widen and deepen with the needs which it has to meet, and whether for good or evil, his powers came into grander play in the later period of his life. But there was never a moment from his boyhood when he was not among the greatest of men. His life is one long struggle, one long mastering of difficulty after difficulty. But, one after another, he does master all. "William," says Mr. Freeman, "learned to become the Conqueror of England only by first becoming the Conqueror of Normandy and the Conqueror of France." At seven years old he was left a mere child-ruler among the vilest and the most turbulent baronage in Christendom. But even the feuds, the treacheries, the poisonings, the assassinations of his boyhood bring us face to face with the men who are afterwards to play so important a part in the reduction of England. Roger of Montgomery, whose name lives in a border county, was the grandson of the fierce Talvas who cursed the boy in his cradle. William Fitz-Osbern was the son of the faithful seneschal who fell mas-

sacred before his chamber door. It gives a reality and vividness to the future story to be brought thus early on such different fields face to face with the youth who is to be the Lord of Glamorgan, or the boy-Bishop of Bayeux whose mace is to fall so heavily at Senlac. But it is still more real and vivid to be face to face with the boy-Conqueror himself, as he hurries for safety from the castle to the cottage, or dashes through the fords of Vire with the traitors in his track. William grew up to manhood amid a chaos of anarchy and treason and blood, his claims disputed, his guardians slain, robbed by the very king who had sworn to protect him. His greatness is not that he lived to master this chaos, but that he learnt in it to master himself. When one great blow laid Normandy at his feet, he stood forth, still on the mere verge of manhood, not merely a great statesman and a great general, but calm, temperate, averse to blood, just, pious with a real and manly piety. Mr. Freeman has for the first time pointed out the full import of the victory at Val-ès-Dunes, the last effort of the old Scandinavian Normandy against the influences of Latin civilisation which streamed in the wake of French alliances and the French tongue. By what seems a mere accident of revolt, the men of the Bessin and the Cotentin were arrayed against their Duke; the men of Rouen and Upper Normandy fought for him.

Half the interest of the story, as Mr. Freeman tells it, is to be found in the familiarity with the

scene of it which a thousand incidental touches betray. Without the poetic gift by which Sir Francis Palgrave painted for ever the dark pool of Mortemer or the cascades of Mortain, Mr. Freeman still sets us fairly in the midst of the Cotentin, "its rich meads, its hills and valleys, its lochs and marshes, the dreary landes by the great minster of Lessay, the cliffs which look down on the fortress of Cæsar, and which had stood as beacons to guide the steps of Harold Blaatand to the rescue"; or in front of "the steep of Creuilly, where a vast fabric of later times has displaced the ancient donjon" of Hamon of Thorigny, or beside Valognes, "the old town so rich in Roman remains, the rich and fanciful outline of whose Gothic cupola is one of the most striking objects of the architecture of the district." The struggle was indeed worth painting, for, mere combat of horse as it was, the victory told on the fortunes of the world. Mr. Freeman points out clearly its effect on Normandy.

William was but a boy of nineteen when he mastered Normandy at Val-ès-Dunes, he was but twenty when he changed the fortunes of France, and, in the end, of Europe, by bridling the ambition of Anjou. The abstract of the earlier Angevin history which Mr. Freeman has prefixed to his account of the struggle is an instance of what we have before pointed out as the besetting sin of his book—the accumulation of facts which have no bearing on the story which he has to tell. The successive marriages

of Fulk Nerra have a place in Angevin history, or in an history of England under the Angevins, for the temper which they illustrate played an important part in shaping the fortunes of Anjou, and the character of his house. But what possible bearing has Fulk's inconstancy or his dedication of the Abbey of Loches on the issue of the Conquest? Moreover, we must say in justice to the Count, that when he dedicated his abbey "in honore ac memoria illarum coelestium virtutum quas Cherubin et Seraphin sublimiores sacra testatur auctoritas," it is odd construing to translate this "in honour of the Cherubim and Seraphim." Above them in the cœlestial hierarchy came the three Persons of the Trinity, and it was to the Trinity that Fulk dedicated his house at Loches. But, while busy with details such as these, Mr. Freeman has omitted to point out the one great characteristic of Angevin history which really does bear on this struggle. From Ingelger to Geoffry the Handsome, Anjou is ever battling with Northmen and Normans. The one reign of Fulk Nerra forms the only break in the long fight through which, as the representatives of France and the French, the Angevin Counts wrest Central France from the Norman, drive him from Maine, master at last the Norman capital and the Norman throne. The loss of Normandy under John, an event whose importance to English history it is impossible to overestimate, hangs on these skirmishes around Domfront and Alençon. But we pass rapidly over

the wars by which the progress of Anjou was thrown back for a century to the work of civilisation and peace which was really fitting Normandy for its work in the West. In the eyes of those to whom the external facts of policy and war are valuable only as symbols of the greater moral and intellectual movements which form the life of a people, it is probable that the few pages which Mr. Freeman devotes to the religious and educational reforms which sprang from the great Abbey of Bec will be the most interesting in his book.

But though the Abbey has gone, its work lives round us still. Much of the nobler character of the Conquest, and of the realm that sprang from it, came from Lanfranc. Half the dogmatic theology that still rings from our pulpits was the creation of Anselm. The two men, the lawyer of Pavia, the scholar of Aosta, were the gift of Italy to the Normans, as Guiscard and Tancred were the gift of the Normans to Italy. They raised Bec, the poorest and the most ignorant of all the monastic houses of the province, into a fame and an intellectual eminence unrivalled in the West. We could have wished that Mr. Freeman had given us more—even at the risk of repeating a legend or two — of the actual life and tone of an institution destined to exert so immense an influence on our own country as the great Abbey which furnished three occupants almost in succession to the Archiepiscopal throne of Canterbury. As it is, the few pages devoted to Bec and Ouche are the

only break in the purely political character of this history. Its fault, as a narrative of the time, remains precisely what we pointed out in our review of the former volume — an indifference to those deeper influences, religious, social, intellectual, which underlie the mere outer facts of politics. Mr. Freeman's work, as it stands, is essentially a work of historic reaction, a deliberate return, on a far grander scale and with a moral energy such as they never dreamt of, to the school of Brady and of Carte. All the new fields of thought that have been opened up by the deeper and wider sympathies which the French Revolution awakened are passed by without a glance. The Gyrth of *Ivanhoe* was an anachronism, but it showed, at any rate, a consciousness that history was incomplete unless it entered into the social life of the people. When Lord Macaulay pauses in the annals of William's reign to signal the birth of the modern newspaper, he teaches us that to trace the progress of intelligence is a nobler task than to tell the triumphs of arms. However sickening the sentimentalism of Mr. Froude may here and there appear, we feel that his chapter on the early Protestants, the labourers and wool-combers who met by night in spite of bishops and kings, throws more light on the Reformation than all the tomes of Burnet. But Mr. Freeman passes silently by religion, intellect, society. He views and admires the people gathered in its witan, but he never takes us home to the thegn's hall or the peasant's hut. Of

the actual life, the manners, the tastes of our forefathers, this book tells us nothing. It is a little hard that we hear nothing of English society just when it is about to be moulded into new forms by the great event which awaits us in the coming volume, nothing of English literature just at the moment when, with the exception of one grand chronicle lingering on for a century, we are to lose the echoes of our English tongue. It is true that the literature of the period which Mr. Freeman has described is scanty and miserable, but its very poverty in all intellectual qualities makes it an admirable index of the general torpor and stagnation from which the sword of the Conqueror and the schools of Lanfranc were to rescue England. We point out these faults the more freely because we have freely acknowledged the great merits of Mr. Freeman's work. It is a perfect miracle of research. All the questions which it professes to treat it treats exhaustively, and it is unlikely that any future labourer in this particular field will add any additional facts to those which the author has collected. Nor is this research the mere erudition of a Dryasdust. Mr. Freeman has buried himself in his subject till every detail of it lives for him; he has the same air of familiarity with his times which is the charm of Palgrave, but it is accompanied with a taste and an accuracy far superior to those of Sir Francis. The book, too, has great moral merits: it glows with a passionate love of civil freedom and a passionate detestation of all

that is cruel and unjust. If there is hero-worship in it, there is none of its baser imitation, the mere craven worship of brute force. The style, too, is as lofty and sustained as the tone; we long, as we have said before, for an occasional dash of pathos or humour, but we cannot but do justice to the unflagging vigour with which the tale is carried through. In a word, the book is a noble book, and the greatest incident of our history is in the hands of an historian who can tell it as it ought to be told.

VI

(1869)

It is not too much to say that the present volume (vol. iii.) of the History of the Conquest places its author in the front rank of living English historians. In its predecessors Mr. Freeman had displayed indeed great historic powers, but they were powers balanced to some extent by very grave defects. On the one side the reader recognised the widest and the most accurate research, a living familiarity with the times and men of whom he wrote, great literary command over an immense mass of materials, a narrative whose unflagging energy and spirit stood powerfully in contrast with the coolness and patience of judgment shown in the discussion of evidence and the decision of historical problems; above all, a high moral tone,

a fervent admiration of good men, an equally fervent hatred of evil, a scornful refusal to bow before the modern idols of "necessity" and "accomplished fact," an intense and outspoken love of national liberty. On the other hand, it was difficult not to recognise a certain narrowness of intellectual as of moral sympathy; what Mr. Arnold would call an overpowering Teutonism; a tendency to mistake constitutional forms for actual freedom; a yet more pronounced tendency to hero-worship—not, indeed, the worship of mere strength or success, but still hero-worship; a want of insight into the complexities and inconsistencies of character; an intolerance—if we may say so—that smacked rather of the life of the study than of life among men; an indifference to large and important fields of human action, to literature, to religious enthusiasm, to art, to industry. Moreover, in the style itself one remarked a frequent diffuseness, a monotonous repetition of pet phrases, with here and there an elevation of tone which overstepped the limits of literary taste; in the very abundance of facts a certain want of proportion and inability to discriminate between important and unimportant, between great and small. It was with not a little anxiety, then, in the interest of historical literature, that we awaited the appearance of the present volume. It brought Mr. Freeman to the central year of his story, that with which, in his own emphatic words, "no one year in later English history can for a moment compare." It brought

him to the reign, to the victory, to the fall of the King whom he had made his hero, "the first and last king who reigned purely because he was the best and bravest among his people." It brought him, above all, to "that memorable morning when Northern and Southern Europe, when England and Normandy, when Harold and William, met face to face in the great wager of battle on the day of Saint Calixtus." It was by this volume that its author, as an historian, would have to stand or fall, and it is this volume which, as we said at the outset, places Mr. Freeman among the first of living English historians. The powers which he displayed before, he has displayed here in a yet higher and more masterly way. By a singular good-fortune the very nature of the story he had to tell saves him from most of his defects. The discussion of literary, or social, or religious subjects is precluded by the clash of arms. At great crises such as this the historian has to deal only with the larger and simpler forms of human character and human action. Teutonic fanaticism becomes pathetic when it tells the overthrow, if only the imperfect and temporary overthrow, of "our ancient and free Teutonic England"—the "fatal day," as Mr. Freeman calls it, falling as he does so into the very dirge-like tones of an earlier Englishman—"the fatal day of England, the day of the sad overthrow of our dear country, the day of her handing over to foreign lords." Even hero-worship gains a grandeur strange to Mr. Carlyle or Mr. Froude when it bows itself, not before the

triumphs of Henry or the victories of Frederic, but before the King who sinks in agony at the foot of the standard. The rush, the crowd of events, precludes languor or diffuseness. The heroic grandeur of the tale of itself gives proportion. There is no temptation to confound great with little when men and acts are alike great. But if this greatness of his subject saved Mr. Freeman from some besetting perils, it put his powers as an historian to the severest test. It is a test which they have borne well. In the whole range of English history we know no nobler record of a year than this, and it is a record as varied, as picturesque in the telling, as it is noble in tone. Like the Tapestry that sets before us at Bayeux the scenes of the Conquest, the story unrolls itself in a web of strangest contrasts—the funeral torches of the dead King casting their fatal glare on the crown of the living one, Harold's weary watch on the one coast set against the restlessness of his rival on the other, the winds in storm and change moulding like Fates the destinies of men, the Saga of the Northern sea-king breaking in on the tangled threads of diplomacy, the old England and the new facing each other on the slopes of Senlac. The pathos, the romance, the Homeric strife of page after page hurries us along spellbound from the death-wail of the last sovereign of the House of Cerdic to the hour of lurid grandeur when the Conqueror eats and drinks among the dead.

The volume opens with the accession and the

reign of Harold, and Mr. Freeman's aim can best be expressed in his own words :—

> I hold that King Harold was a king as lawful as any king, I might almost say more lawful than any other king, that ever reigned over England. No other king in our history ever reigned so distinctly by the national will. But there is no king, there is hardly any man, in our history who has been made the object of such ceaseless calumny from his own time to ours. The hostile faction triumphed not only on the field of battle, but in the pages of pretended history, and for eight hundred years the name of Harold has been constantly branded with the appellations of "perjurer" and "usurper." My object is to do what I can to undo this great wrong, to bring back the true history of a great man and of a great time, and to set forth Harold and his acts as they appeared to his countrymen in his own days.

With this view, Mr. Freeman has minutely examined in successive appendices the evidence on which the alleged bequest of the Crown to Harold and to William, and the election of the former, have been based. His conclusions are embodied in the opening pages of his text, in the death-scene of the Confessor and the coronation of Harold—scenes which the happy discovery of Eadward's biography and Mr. Freeman's brilliant use of the Tapestry enable him to paint with a remarkable and picturesque minuteness of detail. The coronation followed hard on the burial, as the election had followed hard on the death. "No wonder that by the grave of Eadward men wept and trembled." With this terror at home, with the host of his great enemy mustering abroad, with his own family disunited, his brother moving every power of

Northern Europe to assail him, the sympathies of his sister—as it would seem—enlisted on the side of his foes, Harold entered on his brief and troubled reign. It is a reign which, till the appearance of this book, has been simply a blank in our history. In some ways it must remain a blank still. Of the details of Harold's actual government, of the real character of his administration, we know just as little as, in spite of Mr. Freeman's strenuous efforts, we know of his administration as Eadward's Minister. For ourselves, we must confess to a belief that we know little because there is little to know. At any rate the eulogistic formulas of Florence are just as worthless for all historical purposes as the abusive formulas of the Norman writers. But on three of the main events of those memorable months Mr. Freeman has thrown a fresh and unexpected light. For the first time he has rescued from mere legend the real story of Stamford-bridge. He has described as no other writer has done Harold's military efforts, and the long watch of army and fleet along the Southern coast. What is perhaps more remarkable in the light it throws on current English politics, he has disentombed from the life of Wolstan a difficulty in Harold's way which, so far as we know, had never found its way into history before. By the commendation of Eadward, by the election of the Witan, the mass of the Northumbrian people refused to be bound. In other words, the one indivisible England which plays so important a part in Mr. Freeman's

former volumes is a simple constitutional fiction. Three realms with different histories, traditions, sympathies, bowed beneath the sway of an English king, and the talk of "treason" and the like, which turns the story of the Mercian Earls wherever we meet with it in these pages into a farce, is simply an anachronism. But we are not now discussing the story of the Mercian Earls. The passage, eminently valuable in its general historical bearing, is still more valuable as illustrating the character of Harold. "Harold's way of bringing in the proud Danes of the North to his obedience was not exactly the same as William's way." He rode straight to the North:—

With that noble and generous daring which is sometimes the highest prudence, Harold determined to trust himself in the hands of the people who refused to acknowledge him. There his enemies who would not that he should reign over them, instead of being brought and slain before him, were to be won over by the magic of his personal presence in their own land. . . . Years had passed since Northumberland had seen a king. Thirty-five years earlier Cnut had passed through the land on his victorious march against the Scots. Whether the first Harold, whose capital seems to have been Oxford, ever found his way to York is uncertain. But there is nothing to lead us to suppose that Harthacnut or Eadward had ever seen any part of their dominions north of Shrewsbury, perhaps not even north of Gloucester. Thus the mere presence of a king in the North of England would be something strange and exciting; and the mere presence of a king can, as we all know, often work wonders. . . . The personal pleadings of a king, even when they are far weaker in themselves, are seldom heard in vain; and the voice of reason and prudence speaking from the lips of such a king as Harold was still less likely to be without fruit. The Northumbrian Danes had received from Harold a mark of

consideration and confidence such as they had hardly received from any king since the days of Eadgar. It is no wonder then that the mission of the King and of his saintly companion was successful for the moment. Harold was received as king by Northumberland, as he had already been received as king by the rest of England. Perhaps none of his exploits were more glorious than thus to win for himself a great province, an ancient kingdom, by the mere force of reason and justice.

From this great episode we pass to the long watch of the new King on the Southern coast. From May to September, Harold with fleet and host in hand lay camped around Sandwich, watching the preparations of William, expecting the coming of Tostig. No passage in Mr. Freeman's book will do so much to raise the estimate of Harold as his narrative of these six months. Harold's single standing force was the Huscarls, but their small numbers only fitted them to act as the nucleus of a military force. On the other hand, the "Landfyrd"—the general muster of fighting men—was a body easy to raise for any single encounter, but difficult to keep together. Mr. Freeman might have added to Harold's difficulties the fact that to assemble such a force was in the bulk of cases to bring labour to a stand-still. The men gathered beneath his standard were the farmers and ploughmen of their fields. The ships were the fishing-vessels of the coast. It is no wonder that in September the task of holding them together became impossible. But the dispersion had hardly taken place when the two great clouds which had so long been gathering fell at once upon the

realm. A change of wind released the landlocked armament of William. But before changing, the wind which served to prison him had served to fling the host of Harold Hardrada on the Northumbrian coast. To the illustration as well of the great battle which followed, as of the earlier combat which preceded Harold's march to the rescue, Mr. Freeman has brought an accurate local knowledge both of the country round York and of the field of Stamford-bridge. He tells for the first time the story of the engagement of Fulford, where the hasty levies of the two earls were routed by the Norsemen, and of the forced march which brought Harold to the scene of his greatest victory. The great fight, memorable in itself as the close of the long struggle of England with the Norsemen, was memorable too as a prelude to the yet greater fight of Senlac. In its narrative Mr. Freeman has sacrificed to a sound criticism "the magnificent legend which has been commonly accepted as the history of this famous battle." But the story which takes its place, hardly inferior to its predecessor in romantic interest, is infinitely higher and nobler in its real tone. We pass it over here simply in our desire to pass on to the greater combat which awaits us. But told as Mr. Freeman has told it, the battle of Stamford-bridge hardly yields in attraction to the battle of Senlac. The banquet that celebrated the victory was interrupted by tidings of the Norman descent. The story of William, however, and of the encounter

which was to decide between the two rivals, we reserve for another paper.

Thus far we have followed Mr. Freeman without caring to interrupt a story so freshly and vigorously told by comments or criticism. From criticism indeed of the ordinary sort Mr. Freeman is pretty secure. Every fact is accompanied with its own evidence, and a learned apparatus of footnotes is supplemented in all matters that called for more minute inquiry by elaborate appendices. The author prides himself, indeed, in giving his authorities for every statement, and with two remarkable exceptions these authorities are themselves subjected to a complete and dispassionate investigation. We say "two remarkable exceptions," because the authorities we refer to are Florence of Worcester and the English Chronicles. Considering that these works form the basis of Mr. Freeman's statements on most English matters, we own to a little regret in not being able to discover, either in his present volume or his last, his own definite opinion on the date and history of the several Chronicles, or on their relation to each other, or on the relation of each, or all, to the translation which goes by the name of Florence of Worcester. From his use of the names Mr. Earle has adopted, and his references to that gentleman's researches, we might indeed suppose that, with the usual amount of exceptions, their views on this matter were identical. One thing, however, is clear, that whatever Mr. Freeman's view may be, it is absolutely antagonistic to that of

Mr. Earle. Broadly, we may say that Mr. Freeman treats Florence and the Chronicles of Worcester and Peterborough as independent authorities, the two latter of whom were contemporary with the events they describe so far as this period is concerned, and he very naturally regards the concurrence of such authorities as conclusive evidence for any point which it can be brought to prove. That of Peterborough Mr. Freeman again and again dwells on as an "absolutely contemporary" record; he describes its author as writing his account of the election of Harold "at the moment, in the fulness of his heart." Now about the history of these Peterborough annals Mr. Earle is very positive indeed. So far from thinking them contemporary, he believes them to be a curious compilation drawn up in 1121, and to be "the earliest example of a Flores Historiarium." But the odd point is that he also believes the compilation to have been founded on a Worcester Chronicle, just as Florence himself represents for us a lost chronicle of the same religious house. Even if we waive, therefore, the "contemporary" question, and merely touch that of origins, we have Mr. Earle reducing the three voices which play so independent a part in Mr. Freeman's story to the voice of a single Worcester annalist, or at any rate to two voices of annalists writing at the same time at the same spot. Now Mr. Freeman is among the two or three men in all England who, from their own minute acquaintance with the Chronicles, have quite as great a title to be

listened to on the subject of their origin and character and date as Mr. Earle, but unfortunately not one of his appendices gives us any idea what his real opinion on these subjects may be. And yet, without some clue to it, it is impossible to judge of the weight to be attached to his decision on questions so minutely discussed, for instance, as that of the Bequest and Election to the Crown. The almost exact repetition by the Peterborough Chronicler of what Mr. Freeman very accurately terms the "manifesto" of Florence on these questions, is regarded by him as the strongest confirmation of its truth. Though it is the one chronicle, he argues with considerable force, which Florence most probably had not before him, it is on all the three important points "only less distinct and emphatic than Florence himself." Certainly, if we follow Mr. Earle, the chronicle could hardly have been before Florence as he wrote; but if he died in 1118, and the Peterborough annalist made up his book in 1121 from a Worcester basis, there is no very violent assumption in supposing the case might well be reversed, and a copy of Florence might be before the compiler of Peterborough. Where two such authorities differ, however, it would be sheer impertinence in us to suggest any view of our own, but we trust that in a future volume Mr. Freeman will enter at least as minutely as Mr. Earle has done into this difficult question. Till that time, we must confess, some of his most elaborate arguments remain suspended, so far as our appreciation of them is concerned, in air.

VII

(1869)

WE now pass to the second division of Mr. Freeman's volume, in which he has followed the career of Harold's great rival from the field of Val-ès-Dunes to the eve of Senlac. The victory of his boyhood had set William strongly on his throne, but his first effort to secure it by the Flemish match with Matilda plunged him into fresh difficulties from within and from without. The curious problems which this match opens up, the real character of the affinity between the two lovers, the nature and history of the Papal prohibitions, the novel doubts about Matilda's previous marriage, afford Mr. Freeman an opportunity, of which he has ably availed himself, for the display of his powers of exact and critical inquiry. But the bridal is yet more memorable as marking the point where men began to discern the elevation of the Duke's character above the level of his time. The scoffers soon learnt, in the suppression of revolt and the defeat of invasion, that purity had not unnerved the Duke's strong arm. The rebellion of William of Arques indeed tempts Mr. Freeman back into one of the worst of his older faults, from which, as a whole, this volume is free; it is told in twenty pages, while its real importance entitled it to twenty lines. But it is pleasant to ramble, as

this story enables us to ramble, through the bright, cheerful Norman land, to stand, as Mr. Freeman has stood, on the slopes of Val-ès-Dunes, or beside the fosse of Arques, or "in the space between the two hills, a little way from the road" to Neufchatel, where, "almost hidden by trees, lie the shell of a round tower on the mound, a church of but small attractions," and the few scattered houses and gardens that still mark the site of Mortemer. Mr. Freeman marks with perfect precision the new light thrown by the character of the campaign on the development of the Duke. If Mortemer showed a capacity for the ruses of war worthy of Lord Peterborough, Varaville showed a mastery of the strategy of battles which ranks him amongst the greatest generals. It is the first modern instance of the principle so successfully applied afterwards by Napoleon at Austerlitz and by Wellington at Salamanca. At the passage of the Dive, William waited till the bridge divided the forces of the French King, and then flung himself with his whole force on the abandoned rear. The victory is memorable, too, as won by the deadly weapon which, fatal to England at Senlac, was to be identified with her military renown at Crécy and Agincourt. "For the first time in our story, the thunder-shower of the Norman arrows is heard of as carrying dismay and slaughter among the ranks of the enemy." It left William secure from invasion, and the successive deaths of his chief opponents, King Philip and Count Geoffry of Anjou, opened the

way for his conquest of Le Mans. Mr. Freeman has pointed out the strange similarity of his mode of procedure in this case with that which he was so soon to adopt in the case of England, and especially "the aspect of strict legality" with which, in either instance, he strove to invest his claims:—

> While winning Maine, William was beyond all doubt planning how he might win England. He was feeling his way; he was learning his trade; he was practising his 'prentice hand in the great arts of diplomacy and invasion.

But, to our mind, he was practising it unconsciously. Utterly baseless as we agree with Mr. Freeman in holding William's claim on England to have been, we doubt whether a suspicion of its baselessness ever crossed his mind. It is eminently necessary, in a case of this kind, to endeavour to see his claims as William saw them. He did not, in any strict sense, "claim the crown." He claimed the right, which he afterwards used when his sword had won it, of presenting himself for election. He believed—no doubt without good grounds, but he did believe—that he was entitled so to present himself by a direct commendation of the Confessor's. The actual election which stood in his way he did not recognise as valid; and, hurried over as it was without any special convocation of the Witan, and repudiated as it at once was by Northumbria, we can hardly wonder at his belief. That the Witan would have rejected him, whatever the mode of its convocation might have been, we have little doubt;

but the supposition that he had a right to present himself for their choice argues no great ignorance, on William's part, of the English constitution. But with this constitutional claim was inextricably blended a wholly different matter—namely, the private wrong which Harold, as the Normans alleged, had done to William, and the private vengeance which William resolved to exact for it from Harold. Mr. Freeman has done his best to disentangle the two, but even in his mind they remain strangely confused. In his account of the negotiations with Rome, for instance, we have a great flourish of Anglican trumpets about the pretensions of the Papacy to adjudge the crown of England. Is it not possible that the case submitted to Pope Alexander was simply *in foro conscientiae*, that which Malmesbury calls "the justice of the war" as a quarrel against a man forsworn to his lord? That Rome—if such a quarrel were to be fought out—would back the combatants who promised to bring ecclesiastical affairs in England to a condition of something like common decency, might be expected. But was the war, even on this ground, a just one? Mr. Freeman points out clearly enough, from our modern point of view, that the wrong-doing of Harold furnished no just ground for shedding the blood of Englishmen; but even in modern times we have not learnt practically to dissociate the private acts of rulers and the public responsibility of their subjects. Where he has been more successful is in his elaborate

analysis of the conflicting evidence as to the alleged oath of Harold. That it could not, whatever its nature, bind the realm, is of course clear; but Mr. Freeman has thrown an air of high probability over the supposition that it did bind Harold to marry a daughter of the Duke's, and that the marriage with Ealdgyth of Mercia was not concluded till after Harold's accession to the throne. If this were so, it would account for not a little of the irritation of William, and for the universal belief in a "treason" of a peculiar and defiant sort, while the decision of Rome—to which even Mr. Freeman's Anglicanism would hardly refuse the right of exercising a moral censorship even over "the Emperor of Britain" —would become intelligible enough.

We are forced, however, to pass from these tempting topics to the bustle and stir of William's preparations for the invasion. His difficulties were, if we duly consider them, enormous—England and England's strength were all that the terror of his parliament at Lillebonne painted them. He had to win over a reluctant baronage. He could reckon on no internal support, and the invasion of Tostig seemed to have failed even ridiculously. Mr. Freeman has pointed out the effect on the character of the Conquest of the motley host which William was forced to gather from every quarter of France. And this motley host of adventurers he, with a treasury less richly stocked than his rival's, had to keep for months together. Instead of simply

summoning ships, like Harold, from the seaports of his realm, he had to create a fleet, to cut down his trees, to build, to launch, to man. Amid all this he found time not merely for the common business of government, but for negotiations with the Empire, with Swend, with Philip of France, with Brittany, with Anjou, with Baldwin of Flanders, above all with Hildebrand and Rome. Mr. Freeman has done justice to the ability of Harold in his watch along the coast; he has dealt less warmly with the supremer ability of William. But the real greatness of the man has never yet been so largely and philosophically painted as in the account of his Norman rule which this volume contains.

At length all was ready, and the mighty struggle began. On the 27th of September a change of wind set free the long-prisoned armament of the Norman Duke, and on the morning of the 28th his ships were already anchored off the shingly beach of Pevensey. To the voyage, familiar as it is to us, Mr. Freeman has added a picturesque touch here and there from the Tapestry, while he has grouped with great effect round the site of the Duke's landing the earlier associations of the Roman Anderida. The news was borne rapidly to Harold at York, and the days that elapsed between the landing and the battle were spent in his march to London, his muster, and his advance to Senlac. Even after Mr. Freeman's efforts, the chronology of this difficult period remains puzzling enough; but we pass quickly from these

details to his masterly illustration of the strategy of the two generals. The immobility of William on the southern coast and his barbarous waste of the country round, were as completely the proof of sound military judgment as the encampment of Harold:—

> There can be little doubt that William's ravages were not only done systematically, but were done with a fixed and politic purpose. It was William's object to fight a battle as soon as might be. But it was not his object to advance for this purpose far into the country, to seek for Harold wherever he might be found. So to do would have been to cut himself off from his own powerful base of operations, and from his only hope of retreat in case of defeat. It was William's object to bring Harold down to the sea-coast, to tempt him to an attack on the Norman camp, or to a battle on the level ground. In either of these cases the Norman tactics would have a distinct advantage over the English. It is impossible to doubt that the systematic harrying of the whole country round Hastings was done with the deliberate purpose of provoking the English King, and of bringing him in all haste to defend his subjects.

To outward seeming, William's policy appeared to have won success when Harold marched from London to seek his foe. But if the King had resolved to give battle, he had resolved to give it "on his own ground and after his own fashion." To a host subsisting by pillage and naturally scattered, as was the Duke's, to concentrate was to starve. Harold saw clearly that his approach would force William to draw his forces together, and that the army thus gathered must at once fight its foe wherever it might find him. In other words, Harold chose his own battle-ground and forced William to accept it. Mr. Freeman has omitted the cause that thus forced an engagement on

the Duke, but he points out clearly enough that Harold was the winner in the game of strategy, and that his selection of the actual battlefield was only the judicious close of his manœuvres.

The beautiful map of the battlefield which we owe to Sir Henry James is illustrated by a very minute description, and Mr. Freeman points out for the first time what light is thrown on the incidents of the battle by the physical accidents of the ground on which it was fought. Along the higher ground that leads to Hastings, the Duke led his men in the dim October morning to the mound of Telham. It was from thence that the Normans first saw, across the broken, difficult ground between, the host of the English gathered thickly behind fosse and palisade on the jutting height of Senlac. For six long hours of fight the ground was kept. The shout of "God help us" from the one side was met by that of "God Almighty" from the other. In his almost single reference to modern literature Mr. Freeman aptly cites by way of comparison the "one enormous shout of Allah" in *Don Juan*. "The old Teutonic tactics, carried on that day to perfection by the master-skill of Harold, proved too strong for the arts and valour of Gaul and Roman." The repulse of the Norman infantry was followed by the repulse of the Norman horse. Again and again the Duke rallied them and led them to the fatal barricades. All the fury of fight that glowed in his Norseman's blood, all the headlong valour that had

spurred over the slopes of Val-ès-Dunes, mingled that day with the coolness of head, the fertility of resource, the flexible intelligence, the capacity for large combination that had shone at Mortemer and Varaville. In words of almost Homeric fire Mr. Freeman tells how the Duke, maddened at the first symptom of flight, spurred right at the standard; how, unhorsed, the terrible mace struck down Gyrth, while Leofwine fell beside him; how again, dismounted, a blow from his hand smote to earth the disobedient rider who would not yield him his steed; how, amid the roar and tumult of the battle, he turned the very flight which he had so hardly arrested into the means of victory. A feigned retreat drew its defenders from the right, and the Bretons won the western plateau of the hill, while the French, under cover of William's terrible onslaught in the centre, had made good their ascent upon the east. At three the hill seemed won; at six the fight still raged around the standard. There, at the memorable spot marked afterwards by the High Altar of the Abbey of Battle, the English King still stood, the centre of his Huscarls.

With the fall of Harold the day was over, but Mr. Freeman still lingers on the battlefield to show the broken fragments of the host struggling against destiny, and to tell the last rally of the flying English in the bottom of Malfosse. If we pass over these, it is because his account will, to his readers, speak for itself. Never has a battle in our history

been told before with such minuteness of detail, with such precision of time and ground, with such military clearness, with such heroic force. Here and there, of course, we might wish a phrase away. Demonstratives like "now" and "there" are used far too profusely. But as a rule the English is nervous and manly in phrase, while the exalted tone which so often jars upon us in Mr. Freeman's lesser scenes is redeemed from all suspicion of rhetoric by the grandeur of this. If we cannot wholly sympathise with him in his Teutonism elsewhere, it is no small literary advantage to him here. Narrators like Thierry are very naturally carried away by the variety, the eventfulness, the final triumph of the attack. The battle becomes a new battle in the hands of one whose real sympathy is with the long endurance, the heroic patience, of the defence. The heart of Mr. Freeman is beneath the standard of Harold. Others have told the muster of the Norman array, have pointed out knight after knight as they defiled beside the Duke. Mr. Freeman is the first to show us the camp of the English, to penetrate among their serried masses, to rescue from oblivion the few names that remain of those that fought, to tell the last re-forming of the shield-wall round the King, the spring of warrior after warrior to single combat, the desperate fighting on in the darkness, the last rally in the night. The mere change of historic front—if we may so say—throws a new light on the most familiar incidents. Take the well-known charge that

the English spent the night in song and revelry, the Normans in prayer. What a fresh colour the charge adds to the story in Mr. Freeman's defence!

> We shall hardly deem the worse of our countrymen if that evening's supper by the camp-fires was enlivened by the spirit-stirring strains of old Teutonic minstrelsy. Never again were those ancient songs to be uttered by the mouth of English warriors in the air of a free and pure Teutonic England. They sang, we well may deem, the Song of Brunanburh and the Song of Maldon; they sang how Æthelstan conquered and how Brihtnoth fell; and they sang, it well may be, in still louder notes the new song which the last English gleeman had put into their mouths—
>
> How the wise King
> Made fast his realm
> To a high-born man,
> Harold himself,
> The noble Earl.

Of Harold himself we spoke sufficiently in our notice of Mr. Freeman's previous volume to render it needless to enter on the topic here. One little reflection, indeed, has made us less inclined to quarrel with Mr. Freeman's eulogies on Harold now than we were then. It is true that Mr. Freeman still terms him "great." But greatness with Mr. Freeman means less any personal quality than part of the necessary belongings of an "Emperor of Britain." If the emperor, indeed, gets beaten in battle, he has no more claim to greatness than a Mercian earl. But if he be a well-conducted emperor his claim is clear. Ælfred is great, and Æthelstan is great, and Eadmund is great, and Eadgar is great, and Eadmund Ironside is great,

and Cnut is great, and Harold is great. So far, indeed, the phrase is endurable, but it tries us a little when it stoops to meaner men than emperors. "The great Charles" and "the great Otto" are all very well, though we could bear to meet them now and then as plain "Otto" and "Charles"; but all our reverence for the Archbishop will hardly reconcile us to "the Great Dunstan"; and "the Great William" with big capitals recalls, we are sorry to say, only "the Divine Williams" of M. Victor Hugo. Without capitals, indeed, we are not inclined to deny greatness to William; on the contrary, he stands to our mind among the very greatest ones of the earth. To compare the narrow range, the petty history of Harold, with the genius of the Duke is to us much as if a man proclaimed "Chevy Chase" as great a work of poetry as the dramas of Shakespeare. The grandest scene in Mr. Freeman's book is the picture of William as he returns triumphant to the place of slaughter:—

> A place of slaughter indeed it was when from morn till twilight the axe and javelin of England, the lance and bow of Normandy, had done their deadly work at the bidding of the two mightiest captains upon earth. Dead and dying men were heaped around, and nowhere were they heaped so thickly as around the fallen Standard of England. There, where the flower of England's nobility and soldiery lay stretched in death, there where the banner of the Fighting Man now lay beaten to the ground, the Conqueror knelt, he gave his thanks to God, and bade his own banner be planted as the sign of the victory which he had won. He bade the dead be swept aside; the ducal tent was pitched in this, as it were, the innermost sanctuary of the Conquest, and meat and drink were brought

for his repast in the midst of the ghastly trophies of his prowess. Then he took off his armour; his shield and helmet were seen to be dinted with many heavy blows; but the person of the Conqueror was unhurt. He was hailed by the loud applause of his troops, likening him to Roland and Oliver and all the heroes of old. Again he returned thanks to God, again he thanked his faithful followers, and sat down to eat and drink among the dead.

VIII

(1872)

THE new volume (vol. iv.) of his *History of the Norman Conquest* brings us practically to the close of Mr. Freeman's work. He has still to examine the immediate influence of the great revolution which he has described on the social and intellectual condition of the conquered country, and to trace its constitutional results as far as the reign of Edward I. But as a direct historical narrative, his work ends with the death of William at the close of the present volume. If we compare it with its predecessors, it stands in some ways, no doubt, at a certain disadvantage. As a writer Mr. Freeman is emphatically among them "that delight in war," and though there is fighting enough in the ground he traverses here, there is no such great contest as that of Senlac to fire him to the enthusiasm which flowed through his story of the death-struggle between William and Harold. Nor is there that novelty in the subject of William's rule itself which made his account of the Confessor's

reign a distinct addition to English history. On the contrary, he is necessarily forced to traverse ground which has been already traversed by two great historians. In spite of the depreciatory references to Thierry which crowd the pages before us, we remain convinced that no amount of blundering can destroy the artistic value, the literary grace, the picturesqueness, and interest of Thierry's work; while, fragmentary as is the condition in which Sir Francis Palgrave's account has come down to us, its learning and originality make it a formidable rival to all aftercomers. On the other hand, the present volume has a dramatic unity which its predecessors necessarily lacked. Throughout it we are at home. The story does not run on two legs; it no longer carries us abruptly from England to Normandy, only to whirl us abruptly back from Normandy to England. In the former portion of the work this double character was inevitable, but during the reign of William the part played by Continental affairs is so small that it hardly interrupts the purely English current of the narrative. It is a still greater gain that our sympathies are not distracted by the presence of a couple of heroes. Harold is dead and buried, and throughout the present volume we are face to face with the Conqueror alone.

The disadvantages of his present story bring some of Mr. Freeman's merits conspicuously to the front. It is no slight praise to say that in historical lists like these he has fairly borne down his competitors, that

he has added interest to a story which Thierry has handled, and discovered materials for the illustration of the Conquest which had escaped the research of Palgrave. If it is impossible to make the story wholly novel, he has at any rate given novelty to almost every part of it by his remarkable use of the details preserved in Domesday, and by his descriptive sketches of English towns, while the lack of military interest is atoned for by constitutional dissertations in which he stands immensely above his two predecessors. But though he can battle bravely with the disadvantages of his subject, Mr. Freeman shows less inclination to grasp its advantages. The distinctive peculiarity of the present volume, as we have said, is that from one end of it to the other we are face to face with the Conqueror. William is no mere name round which the historian may group a varied series of events which happened to occur in his time. His own vigorous personality meets us at every turn. From his coronation to his grave he fills the whole canvas. The terrible conquest, the wise reorganisation, the mingled order and tyranny of his rule, the triumphs of its opening, the calamities of its close, all are his own. It is William whose sword hews its way from Cornwall to the Firth of Forth, or whose statesmanship plans that wonderful union of the older Teutonic constitution with the newer feudalism which created the England in which we live. Able men like Lanfranc are his counsellors, but they are never more than his counsellors. The

work, for good or ill, is always his own. It is seldom that a man of such intellectual stature stands out so distinctly on the canvas of his time. The flatteries of his chaplain, the cold censure of the English chronicler, the traditions that floated down in the great houses of the Conquest, the letters of Lanfranc, the stories of Orderic, a hundred of such anecdotes as men of this sort are sure to grave deep in the popular memory, all enable us to know William as few historic heroes can be known. His character itself, too, is full of grand contrasts—the Norseman struggling with the civiliser, the wild passions of a savage bursting through the crust of the statesman. Few figures, in a word, are more fitted to kindle the imagination of the historian, and it is a little disappointing when we find that Mr. Freeman regards it with a coldness which tells upon every page of his book. It is not that he is ever purposely unjust to the Conqueror; it is that one feels throughout what a distinctly moral effort it costs him to be just. More than just he is resolute not to be. There is not a trace of sympathy, of fervid admiration, of enthusiasm in the picture. The historian has washed off the brilliant colours in which he painted Harold from his palette, and sketches his great rival accurately and conscientiously, but in grey. The result is inevitable. We bow with respect before the care and accuracy which are displayed, but we gain no lifelike impression of William.

The result is the more provoking that it does not

spring from any want of power in the painter himself. Of all characters in our history Harold's is the one of whom we actually know least, yet Mr. Freeman has known how to create a Harold. William's life and character, on the other hand, is preserved to us with an amazing fulness, yet Mr. Freeman has left the Conqueror a figure without warmth or interest. What it really springs from is, if we may venture to term it so, an historic caprice. Mr. Freeman has chosen for his judgment of William the standpoint of a Peterborough monk of the eleventh century, who has left us his impressions of the Conqueror in the English Chronicle. With the chronicler, he is awed by William's amazing greatness, he is ready on the whole to do justice to his moral excellence, but he is not going to like him any more than the monk of Peterborough likes him. The choice of such a standpoint undoubtedly gives a certain originality and force to Mr. Freeman's view of the matter; but the standpoint is, after all, an artificial one; the English feeling about the Conqueror, or indeed any estimate of his own time, can only fairly be taken into account as elements in the larger appreciation of his character which history demands. On the other hand, this almost contemporary feeling which pervades Mr. Freeman's work has its obvious advantages in dealing with the time itself. The clearness and precision with which it enables the historian to grasp the very different aspects of different periods during William's reign appear in the opening of the present

volume. Nothing can be finer than the way in which Mr. Freeman points out the character of William's position as soon as the coronation made him legally an English king. Resistance became in the eyes of a large proportion of his subjects rebellion, and all hope of any combined national rising was at once lost. It was with local revolts that the Conqueror had henceforth to deal, and these revolts left half the realm untouched from first to last. If we set aside the momentary outbreak in Kent, which had nothing to do with William himself, the whole country eastward of a line from the Fens to Lincolnshire remained steadfastly loyal to the new sovereign.

Nor did William assume in this earlier period of his reign the character of a conqueror at all. He regarded himself, and he called on England to regard him, as the lawful successor of Eadward, elected by the free choice of the people, and crowned formally by the Church. Of course there were difficulties in the way of such a theory, whether arising from his own Norman followers, whose greed it effectually checked, or from the stubborn resistance of a large part of his English subjects. Still there can be no doubt that at the outset William held it, and held it firmly. There was a striking likeness, as Mr. Freeman points out, between his position and that of Cnut, and what difference there was between them seemed all in his favour. William's accession was followed by few confiscations, and by no such judicial murders as had disgraced the opening of the Danish

rule. The land, too, so far as outer appearances went, had accepted William's rule. The oppression of his lieutenants during his absence in Normandy did little to disturb its tranquillity; the disturbances in Kent and Hereford were easily suppressed; and an English party was growing up, especially among the trading and ecclesiastical classes, in William's favour. No one, we think, has definitely pointed out before the real relation of England to the Conqueror during the year which followed William's coronation. But his position as an English sovereign is strikingly shown in his early campaign against Exeter and the cities of the West. The account of their confederation and revolt forms one of the most remarkable passages in the volume; the claims of Exeter seem oddly to have resembled those of the Italian towns a century later. Its burghers offered to pay tribute, but they would accept no king or king's reeve within their walls. The notable thing, however, is that the revolt was put down by an English army, and the conquered citizens were treated as subjects rather than vanquished strangers by their conqueror.

The fine description which Mr. Freeman has given of Exeter itself is an admirable instance of the way in which the local position and the archæological features of a place may be made to contribute to the illustration of general history. It is by a series of pictures of this sort that he has succeeded in giving interest to the period which followed this year of

peaceful submission, the period, strictly speaking, of the Conquest. Of the successive campaigns in which William trampled down the revolts which burst forth around him we know comparatively little, except in the great crisis which followed the appearance of Swend's fleet in the North. The best part of Mr. Freeman's work lies in his reconstruction, if we may use a Niebuhrian phrase, of this lost period of history by means of a careful survey of Domesday Book, and of a close local acquaintance with the towns which fell before the Conqueror's sword. The picture of Lincoln is peculiarly interesting, for Lincoln witnessed not merely the creation of a new French town on the height now crowned by its castle and minster, but the actual transfer of the elder English burghers to a new and lower site.

Domesday has been worked into the fabric of the history with similar skill. One of Mr. Freeman's discoveries by means of it is that of an early forfeiture and redemption of lands, which must have followed immediately on William's accession. But through every stage of the Conquest we are allowed to see the social and agrarian revolution which followed the march of the Conqueror. Domesday, indeed, is made to do such yeoman's service to history throughout the present volume that we can hardly complain if Mr. Freeman shows himself less sensible of the other opportunities for illustrating this period which present themselves in less trustworthy quarters. We find, for instance, the dealings of the D'Oillys with

the Abbey of Abingdon, which in the monastic Chronicle present such a vivid picture of the wrong and violence which went on during the Conquest, and yet of the good which mingled with it; but the tale is reduced to its most prosaic form, and buried in an appendix. Yet we can hardly conceive a story which would have brought home more forcibly to an ordinary reader the actual condition of the country at the time. Little social pictures like that of Blachemann's home at Abingdon need hardly have been left in the obscurity of notes. But even when noting here and there a fact which is denied to us, we are astonished at the enormous mass of fresh information which Mr. Freeman has been enabled to give.

IX

(1872)

At the very opening of his reign, in the year of peace which followed his accession, William had already sketched out the main features of his policy—his conception of his own position as an English king, his resolve to unite England into a centralised kingdom by the destruction of the great earldoms, his system of administrative balance in the preservation of the Teutonic system of government and law, face to face with the feudal institutions of a new military aristocracy. In the later chapters of the present volume Mr. Freeman has described the gradual working out

of this conception when the ground had been thoroughly cleared by the years of gradual conquest. The ecclesiastical reforms of the King and his Archbishop, Lanfranc, are described carefully and with remarkable fairness; but "the general effect of Lanfranc's administration, the reform and revival of monasticism, the impulse given to learning," is reserved for an after volume. Even so, however, some use might, we think, have been made of Gundulf, whose personal life, so recently illustrated by Dean Hook, is passed over in silence to make way for his architectural efforts. On the other hand, Mr. Freeman has for the first time shown "the friendly relations which existed at the time between churchmen of Norman and of English birth," by his examination of a very curious document, a sort of bond of spiritual confederation between Bishop Wulstan and his house at Worcester and the abbots of six monasteries, two of whom were foreigners and the rest English. The seven abbeys bind themselves into a brotherhood of devotion and mutual charity, and it clears away a good deal of misunderstanding about the real effects of the Conquest on the Church, when "we find prelates of foreign birth so readily taking their places alongside of the men of the conquered nation with whom they were brought into spiritual alliance." Here, again, Mr. Freeman is strongest on the constitutional side of the question. He dwells with much force on "the purely ecclesiastical character, unknown to English usage," which Lanfranc, with

William's sanction, gave to the Councils which he held year after year for the reform of the Church. Of the conscientious motives which influenced both the King and the Primate there can be no possible doubt. But Mr. Freeman has omitted to notice how remarkably the arrangement suited both of the parties who concurred in it. The ecclesiastical theory of the time was flattered by the severance of the spiritual power from the civil; while the isolation of the Episcopate from the nation threw it during the Norman and Angevin reigns helplessly into the hands of the King.

There is, as we cannot help fancying, a certain tone of languor and weariness towards the close of the volume, which perhaps accounts for Mr. Freeman's treatment of a part of his work which we should have supposed would have especially called out his powers. The various measures by which William engrafted his peculiar modification of feudalism on the older English Constitution are all accurately described, but we have no such general picture of the new Norman Constitution as Professor Stubbs has given us in two or three pages of the wonderful Introduction which he has prefixed to his little volume of *Documents Illustrative of English History*. The new administrative developments which, if they do not begin with William, were rapidly pushed forward by him; the increased jurisdiction of the King's Courts; the silent growth of a ministry and judicature in the King's Chapel; the germs of the Exchequer which one finds, for instance, in the Domesday Com-

missions, are passed over with little notice. Nor, again, do we find the special character of English feudalism, or the differences which separated it from the feudalism of the Continent, insisted on with Mr. Freeman's usual vigour. On the other hand, he dwells with especial animation on William's love of the chase. With Ælfred, for instance, the chase had been as much a part of his Royal office as war or government; and even in the later legislation of Cnut, in the earliest Forest Law, the special claims of the Royal hunters had not interfered with the general right of every subject to slay the wild beasts on his own ground. But "with William a new period in these matters begins." What had been every man's duty was changed into the mere sport of a few privileged kings or barons; and Mr. Freeman finds in the Conqueror and his sons the first instances of that peculiar form of modern enjoyment which seeks pleasure "in the wanton infliction of suffering and death." He has perhaps borne a little too hardly on the Norman kings, in failing to remark how inevitable such a change was as the waste progressively disappeared before the efforts of the cultivator while the habits of the kings or nobles remained unchanged, and while the chase afforded their one means of escape, save war, from the tedium of their homes. But the observation is a very striking one, and it throws a new and satisfactory light on the bitter outbreak of the Chronicler against the new Forest Laws, and the resolute opposition of the people to them through

two centuries of struggle with their kings. As to the New Forest itself, Mr. White has, if we remember rightly, shown that there is a vast deal of exaggeration on the contemporary accounts of William's devastations: that the villages and churches, for instance, which he is said to have demolished, went on quietly enough within the extended bounds of the Forest itself. The moment, indeed, we get rid of the modern notion of "Forest" as woodland, and conceive of it in the mediæval fashion simply as land exempt from the common law and subject to peculiar provisions respecting the chase, the creation or extension of Forests ceases to be a very terrible matter, and certainly does not necessarily mean the "devastation of a large tract of fertile country." Any one who knows the New Forest knows that very comfortable villages and homesteads still exist within its bounds.

This enclosure of the New Forest, however, plays, next to the execution of Waltheof, the most prominent part in Mr. Freeman's theory, or rather in the contemporary English theory which Mr. Freeman has taken whole from the Chronicler and Orderic, respecting the later years of the Conqueror. With these crimes his glory is supposed to have been changed into shame, and his reign to have died out in disappointment and defeat. The theory was a natural one with any Englishman of the time, and it harmonised with the feeling of the age on the vanity of earthly glory, which we find in Orderic as we find it in Henry of Huntingdon:—

On the guilt (says Mr. Freeman) followed the punishment. William's later days of domestic trouble, of shame and defeat, the disgrace of his arms, the mysterious deaths of his offspring —events which have no parallel in the history of his earlier days—were, so men then deemed, so many strokes of the avenger to requite the blood of Waltheof, and the ruined homes and churches of Hampshire. To speculations beyond this range the historian can say neither "yea" nor "nay."

Facts, as is very often the case, will save the historian from the necessity of deciding on speculations. During the eleven years which are used to "point a moral and adorn a tale," William remained, beyond doubt, the most powerful monarch in Christendom. Without, he was strong enough to hold even Hildebrand at bay. At home his rule was unbroken by a single revolt. He was strong enough to crush the intrigues of Bishop Odo with a single blow. After two years of preparation the Danish fleet did not venture to attack him in his island realm. The Great Survey and the completion of his system of legislation mark these years of supposed decadence. His "domestic trouble" arose simply from the worthlessness of Robert; and the rebellion of one son—a rebellion extinguished almost without an effort—was more than compensated by the fidelity and affection of his two younger boys. The death of a single son is no very rare calamity in a family. The "mysterious" death of his daughter rests on a fanciful legend. The "shame and defeat" resolve themselves into a wound received at the hand of his son and a repulse before Dol, for his withdrawal from St. Suzanne was

simply to meet danger elsewhere. Such events, at any rate, are too small to overcloud the greatness and glory of the last eleven years of William's reign. The view of his government during this period is fair and just, both in its notice of the order he preserved and of the peculiar character of the oppression which was practised under the forms of law. In his mention of the Judicial Duel, Mr. Freeman might have noticed the abhorrence with which the introduction of it seems to have been regarded by the English. The later history of either Leicester or St. Edmondsbury shows how dearly they were ready to pay to free themselves from its yoke. But the most novel part of Mr. Freeman's close lies in his narrative of the revival of the Benedictine monasticism in the North. From all the country north of the Humber the monks had been cleared away by the sword of the Danes, and Selby was the first religious settlement in the old Northumbria. The true revival, however, dates from the arrival of Prior Ealdwine of Winchcombe with two brethren from Corsham. " The three set forth on foot, with an ass to carry their books and vestments," and finally settled in the ruins of Jarrow. Among those who followed their example was one whose story furnishes an admirable illustration of the time :—

Turgot, in after days Prior of Durham, Bishop of Saint Andrews and biographer of the holy Queen Margaret, was an Englishman of noble birth in the parts of Lindesey. Already, it would seem, a priest, he was given to William as one of the hostages for the obedience of his shire. Kept in ward in the castle of Lincoln, he escaped by dint of a bribe to his keepers,

and made his way to a Norwegian ship in the haven of Grimsby. In that very ship certain ambassadors from King William to King Olaf of Norway had already taken their passage. The hostage had been sought for in the ship by the King's officers, but the friendly Northmen kept him hidden till the ship had actually sailed. Then the hostage for whom such search had been made, suddenly appeared before the astonished eyes of the envoys. They called on the sailors to turn back again, that the King's fugitive might be delivered up to him. The Northmen refused, and William's ambassadors had to put up with the company of the man who was fleeing from William's prison. The English priest was received in Norway with all honour, and the pious King Olaf took him as his master in divine things. But the heart of Turgot was ever and anon stirred by calls to the monastic life. At last, enriched with the gifts of the friendly Norwegian king, he set sail to return to England.

Eventually Turgot settled at Wearmouth, and revived the old religious house of Benedict Biscop. The story throws light on the dispersion of the English exiles after the Conquest, which is yet more remarkably brought out in Mr. Freeman's monograph on the Varangian bodyguard at the Court of Constantinople.

In any review of such a volume as this it is impossible to do justice to the amazing research and critical judgment displayed throughout, or to notice all the points on which light has for the first time been thrown. The Hereward story, for instance, is cleared from its veil of legend; and William's policy towards Ireland is explained by his design of adding it to his dominions. The appendices are, as before, models of critical investigation, though we are sorry to find that the mystery about the siege of Oxford remains, after all Mr. Freeman's trouble, as great as before. The merits as well as the faults of his style remain

unchanged. He is still forcible and exact, he still rises to a severe eloquence on great matters; but there is still the same tendency to diffuseness and repetition, and what we must call, for want of a better word, allusiveness. People are described by their titles or their fathers' names, or by some exploit or characteristic, when their own names would serve the purpose far better. The least satisfactory bit in the whole volume is unfortunately the description of William's death. But if anything could atone for this, it would be the new touch of interest which Mr. Freeman has added to the after story in his description of the fire which broke out at the Conqueror's burial. There are a few minor points which suggest themselves as we close. "Cenomannians" is an awkward phrase when "Mancels" exists in Wace and the dialect of the country to-day. The special meaning of the word "Commune," the founding a new liberty on the "conjuratio" of the guild brethren rather than on any traditions of the past, is hardly brought out in the account of the rebellion of Le Mans. A false impression is produced when Mr. Freeman translates the "barbari" of Orderic or William of Poitiers as "barbarians." It is merely a bit of the false classicalism of the time; and Lanfranc, in using the phrase of the English, simply meant "strangers," as Lambert did when he used it of the Normans themselves. But specks of this sort do little more than bring out the general accuracy with which the vast mass of information which Mr. Freeman has brought to bear is treated throughout.

NOTE

The following notes were very roughly jotted down in pencil in a pocket note-book, on the site of the battle of Senlac, in December 1868. In a letter to Mr. Freeman, December 1, 1876, Mr. Green refers to his finding accidentally "the notes of Senlac I made on the ground when we visited Battle Abbey together long agone."

A country rolling in broken irregular waves of gravel outline with thick clay bottoms, ravines, gullies, winding in and out between them, crossing and intercrossing, with a fair bright sun breaking now (20th December) over them and flinging long marked shadows from every tree over the wet sward, and catching and lighting up a rick here and there, and leaving the mists all dim and *veily* in the bottoms, dim and veiled as the rollers in the distance; loveliest sepia effects. Through this country, sloppy, gravelly by turns, came winding William's army, and in the midst out of these broken choppy hills rises the longer ridge of Battle. Stand where William stood—right before the standard on a green rise, sloping gently to a bottom and a beck. In front a broken rise goes up steeply to the castellum, scrub then no doubt; to the left of one the peninsula trends away westward, shrouded now with blue dim woodland. To the right . .

Beneath this west front of the English army and on the left flank of William, which would have been his natural point of attack, the bottoms are singularly broken, clayey, and deep. The ground is naturally impracticable now and more so then, a chaos of dips and rivulets cutting their slow way.

The centre front—from the beck stretches a gentle slope of meadow land, till the very brow of the hill. Then it rises abruptly, crowned with the guesten-hall whose tall undercroft screens and yet measures the "arduae montes." It was October, just such weather and colouring no doubt as this exquisite December day, the same "bare downs" and leafless trees brown-red in the . . .

To the south-east—the French attack—the ground is far easier. Here the peninsula dies down, bisected, into the broken country; not an inch of level ground, dipping, rising, sloping; brown fields broken irregularly and picturesquely with browner hedge lines. Here you face round and see how narrow the ridge is. The church stands on its northern slope, and yet its tower is seen from William's post just topping the ridge among the trees of the Abbey.

As one winds round the French extremity one gets into the rear of the position and sees *here* the church and the brown and white line of the town itself stretching along the peninsula to a windmill

which cuts the sky darkly. One does not see the town from William's front. By the church one sees that this back front is as near as may be direct east. Eastward still and N.E. stretches the Wold, the large bold landscape undulating every-whither and shadowy with dim and distant slopes. It is all tumbled country. There is a sense of largeness and freedom in this rolling Weald as you dip down into its spongy soppy bottoms or mount again the hard sandy slopes. It was over this country, more broken and difficult than the front, that the last flight of the English poured away—down in those bottoms still musical with the voice of waters but else still and veiled in the mists of twilight, that the last fierce rally and running combat took place—William leading the chase into the darkness.

Behind the church a beck winds down from the hill slope bending round to the south—a soppy marshy bottom marked by a line of bushes, this is Malfosse. The descent from the hill here is precipitous—a horse could hardly ride down the brow, and must follow the curves and dips of the slope. All of these are marked with little streamlets with broken rotten banks, the ground deep and soppy with rain. Above is the broken, irregular, picturesque sky line of the town—darkly brown-red in the damp sunshine. I can't express how exquisitely the long shadows of house and hedge and these scattered trees fall along the slopes. Desperately bad ground for

horse this. The slope is broken thus

into waves as it were by the rushing rills.

And beyond is the boundless dark wild Wold, still bare of houses or man, melting away wave after wave into the cloud-waves of the horizon.

The Altar-place lies quiet and still amid shrubs and broad fir-branches in the Abbey gardens. Look from the ruined Dormitory, and you catch the far-off gleam of a *bit of sea* amid the rolling hills, downs.

To the south of the peninsula the French attack, it dies down in broken ground and slopes, up which stretches the street of the town into the general level, here linked to it by a rise at right angles, a sort of short isthmus which closes valley of the Battle running athwart it. Why did not William turn the position by this flank? Why not at any rate direct his chief attack and concentrate his chief strength here? Because he was *held by his base.* He could not attack by his left—the ground beat him; if he weakened his centre Harold swooped on him. Both knew this front—both stationed themselves where the brunt *must* strategically come.

The "tumulus" (Malm.) is there thrown forward,

in front of the ridge, a good steep position thinly sown with trees in front, just in what would be the interval between the English centre and right. Behind this tumulus the ground is an easy slope, up which the Normans could come easily enough and then wheel on the English centre. In fact the abrupt fall of the ridge dies down here, and is thrown forward as it were on the tump. It is the Hougoumont of Battle.

In fact the ridge rises gently along its length to Harold's castellum and then falls again. The French get up where it inclines gently in every direction—down to the country—up to the castellum on which they wheel round. There is on this plateau a small beck in broken ground at the back, which dips down more and more in a deep clayey ravine. This ravine as it deepens divides this (Breton attack) end of the peninsula from the general rolling run of the Downs. This ravine sweeps grandly round, deepening as it goes, round the extreme right of the English position, which it defends splendidly both in rear and flank. The plateau is *absolutely* severed, and stronger on this extremity than anywhere. A belt of bare wintry woodland marks the stream course winding at the base of the curve. In front and sides and rear this part of the field is steeply sloped. In the centre of this part of the plateau is a low tump covered with trees, and close by it a small spring cuts its little course down the hill to the Breton position.

The Bretons attack first round by the rear of the position and get thus down into that clay ravine. So they would be out of sight of the Normans and of the camp, and would be first seen when they came rushing round in wild panic. Then William has to form part of his men *en potence.*

The 'Tump' is no tump, it is a great mamelon, spur, outlier, thrown forward to guard the general position ; it is large, and broken with slight openings where streamlets break away, and now thinly covered with trees, its surface broken with dip and hollow, places where desperate fighting might go on.

Found a *boulder* stone deep in the soil of the slope.

The news of Harold's arrival, though probably known to Duke Wm. through his monastic envoy, who had met the King *en route*, fell like a thunderbolt on the mass of the Norman host. The Duke had at once called on the scattered detachments which were ravaging the country ; throughout the army it was believed that Harold's march was intended as a surprise, and the bulk of the soldiery

watched through the night under arms. The night passed, however, and the morning saw the Duke not the assailed but the assailant. In three divisions the Norman army marched at dawn up the Pevensey wold towards Battle.

Battle—or as it was then called the ridge of Senlac—was the position which the King had seized by his forced march on the night of the 12th-13th. On the last day of September the English thegn who had seen the disembarcation of William and the erection of his wooden fortress had ridden off at dawn with the tidings of woe. Through the whole of that day, and on through the night, and again through the following day, the fatal messenger rode towards York. He seems to have reached the northern capital on the night of the 1st of October. He found Harold celebrating by a solemn feast the victory of Stamford Bridge. Not an hour was to be lost. The King committed to the earls the care of the treasure which had been the spoil of his victory, and bade them follow him with the northern host. It is probable that the bulk had already dispersed to their homes; the rest had grudged the economy with which the drained Exchequer had reserved the spoil to itself, and were probably in no mood to follow Harold to new perils in the south. A fortnight had passed ere these difficulties were overcome and the forces of Northumbria and Mercia appeared before the walls of London

But the great battle had already been fought, and

the broken fugitives of Senlac were pouring over the long bridge into the capital. On the morning of the 2nd, Harold had left York and spurred for London. Gathering what forces he might by the way, and speeding orders to left and right for the gathering of his host at London, he paused once in his journey to kneel before the Rood of Waltham. On the 4th or 5th he entered the city and halted six days to collect troops for the coming contest. It was during that time that the levies came in. Harold was in the midst of his preparations when the Duke's envoy appeared, Dom Margot. The English envoy . . .

The Duke was indeed still clinging to the coast. The flat levels were the most favourable field in which his horse could act, its towns fullest of forage. In his front, in his way to the capital, lay the tangled and barren wold. Even if three days' march carried him over this, the capital was secure against him, and the army of Harold could have held securely the fords of the Thames. To do this was clearly the advice of the party whom Wace embodies in Gyrth. To tempt Harold away from the coast was as clearly William's interest. He made therefore no move forward—he goaded his foe by taunting messages and by merciless ravage. But if the Duke's strategy is clear, we know too little of the political circumstances of the time to decide on the strategy of Harold. Wace represents him as goaded

to frenzy by the ravage; it was probably the shaking fidelity of his subjects which forced him to action. It seems, though, clear that he was resolved to engage before the arrival of Eadwine and Morkere—he may have distrusted the Mercian earls. But whatever doubt there may be of the advisability of any advance at all, the advance once made, there can be none of the perfection of Harold's strategy. The soldiers of William might believe that their leader's hopes had been fulfilled, and that the march of Harold would bring him on them in the levels of Pevensey marsh. But the King was as resolute to avoid as William to invite such a contest. The forced march brought him to the edge of the Weald, and on that edge he seized the ridge of Senlac. Wearied as the soldiers must have been, the night of the 12th was spent in strengthening with additional defences a position naturally of the utmost strength. In that position Harold quietly expected his foe.

If it be the mark of a great general to select his own battle-field and to force his enemy to fight him where he likes and not where his enemy likes, Harold is entitled to the praise of a great general. William was forced to fight, and he was forced to fight on the ground which not he but Harold had chosen. At Senlac Harold commanded the roads to London and along the coast. It was impossible to advance without fighting—it was impossible to remain quiet. For the army to subsist even for a day it must disperse for pillage,

and such a dispersion, with the English army hanging only nine miles off on its flank, was certain ruin. William was forced to advance; and the decision of his character with the sheer necessity of existence made him advance at once. The soldiers, sleepless with the night-watch and panic, were marshalled at dawn of the 13th, and poured along the level (from Hastings or Pevensey?) towards Battle. The first height in the path here preserved in local tradition is the name of Standard Hill; the standard of William, it is said, was first unfurled there. From that hill, it may be, as the long line defiled beneath him, the Duke addressed to Breton and Mancel and Poitevin, to the dense ranks of his own Normans, to the chivalry of France, Flanders, and Ponthieu, the customary words of exhortation. The column was fairly within the outskirts of the Weald, winding along the deep clay bottoms that part the tangled mass of gravel hills, and climbing the slopes that rolled like the long waves of some troubled sea. Its head at last emerged from the woods of
and the Bretons saw before them the foe whom they sought.

Division after division of the Norman host poured over the hill and ranged themselves on the easy open slope. Beneath them lay a small shallow valley, cleft by a tiny rivulet that woke to new life with the autumnal rains. Across the rivulet rose the height of Senlac with the dense masses of the English host.

The King's position, strategically, as we have seen, the key of the whole coast, was in itself one admirably fitted for defence. Physically it is a long plateau, thrown out from the general mass of the Sussex Downs, in a southerly direction parallel with the height on which William was encamped.

The plateau itself extended for about half a mile from north to south; everywhere a narrow strip of the gravels of the Weald, gently undulating, and scored with sudden dips where springs burst forth and seam the hillside, as a whole slightly saddle-backed; high on the north, then falling back for a while, to rise again to the point now marked by the ruins of the Abbey, then by the flag of Harold, and again gently falling till it fades into the general level of the country in the south. Here alone it was without any marked severance or bound; on every other side its fronts were well defined. To the rear the ground fell abruptly; at the southern extremity to the marshy ground which gained from the close of that terrible day the significant name of Malfosse; at the northern to a stream which, gathering the waters of two springs, cleft a deeper and deeper channel beneath a line of brushwood till it swept round the end of the plateau a deep and well-marked ravine, in which the opening of this great drama of war was to be played. It was the western front which the Duke's host faced; a front hardly less defensible than its fellow.

Round the northern plateau . . .

LONDON AND HER ELECTION OF STEPHEN

(1867)

Few periods of English history are more wearisome to the historian, none more carefully avoided by the general reader, than the period which separates the death of Henry I. from the accession of Henry II. The reign of Stephen seems at first sight a mere series of dynastic struggles, purposeless revolutions, battles of kites and crows waged over a nation's agony. But it is in fact to uninteresting periods, such as this, that we have to look for the birth of those great intellectual movements and political principles that leaven all after-history. Behind the veil of blood and fire that hides these stormy years from us a little patience may discern a great religious revival going on, which was to affect in a marked degree the very balance of the Constitution itself. The final defeat of feudalism in the exhaustion of the great houses left England free for the judicial and administrative reforms that throw a lustre over the reign of Henry II. Above all, it was

in the Revolution which seated Stephen on the throne that London first assumed that constitutional position which it has retained for so many centuries since. The struggles of the great city against Cnut, her capitulation with William, the charters she wrested from the Conqueror and his son, are enough to prove her importance at an earlier date than this; but with her part in this Revolution begins that peculiar individual influence which she was to exercise on our national history. The London of the great Charter, of the great Remonstrance, of the Bill of Rights, appears first in the London of Stephen.

The last of the Norman kings died as the first December night of 1135 began to darken: "On mid-winter day," says the Chronicle, four-and-twenty days after, that is, Stephen received the Crown from the Archbishop's hands. Short, however, as the interval was, it was long enough for an outburst of anarchy, which proved but too true an omen of the days to come. The very rigour of the dead king's rule intensified the outburst; common-law, forest-law, alike broke down; the exile, the disinherited, re-entered their possessions; old feuds, crushed beneath the stern justice of "the Peace-loving King," broke out anew. In the midst of the turmoil, Earl Stephen, Henry's nephew, crossed with a fair wind from Wissant, and landed at early dawn amid terrible thunder and lightning, strange in such winter weather. Repulsed at Dover, shut out from

Canterbury, he rode with what speed he might over the frost-bitten fields straight to London. Scant as his train was, his aim was the Crown. The design had not sprung, as his partisans afterwards affirmed, from the news of his uncle's death: ever since the great storm of popular anger which had followed the announcement of the marriage of King Henry's daughter Matilda, the heiress of England, if oaths went for anything, with the Count of Anjou,[1] the thought of Stephen's accession had been familiar to English minds. Nor had he neglected to back this popular expectation by the formation of a Blesine party pledged to support his claim; among the nobles of England many had already sworn friendship to him or to his brothers.[2] His claim as nearest male heir of the Conqueror's blood, strengthened now by the marriage of his only rival to the most hated of foreigners, was supported by his personal popularity. He had been the darling of his uncle Henry; and, mere swordsman as he was, his good-humour, his generosity, his very prodigality, made him a favourite with all. Nor were more solemn sanctions wanting to the popular enthusiasm; hermits were the truest expression of the religious life of the twelfth century, and the most famous of living English hermits had already saluted him as king. Against the walls of the little Dorsetshire village-church of Haselberg leant the miserable

[1] *Sax. Chronicle*, ad annum 1127.
[2] *Gesta Stephani*, p. 6 (Histor. Society's edition).

shanty, where, vexed by fevers and macerations, a gaunt solitary waged his battle against the enemy of souls. Originally a hunting parson, Ulric had all at once flung aside his hounds and his vicarage, and, without waiting for episcopal sanction or priestly benediction, had immured himself in this jealously closed cell. The fame of his sanctity spread far and wide. Men told how, within the narrow walls, Ulric was being buffeted, scourged, dragged about by infuriate demons; how unearthly lights, flitting from church to cell, told of the visits of angelic comforters. The monks of Montacute furnished him with bread from their cellar; merchants of Bristol tossed uneasily beneath their furs as they thought of the hermit's night-long vigil in the icy waters of his brook, and sent him their costly coverlet on the morrow. Soon he was known as England's one miracle-worker and prophet: bold invectives against the wrong-doer, gentle exhortations to better things, came through the closed shutter of the hermit's cell to the ears of courtier and king, for even Henry had turned out of his way to visit him. It was the shrill cry of this solitary that arrested Stephen as he rode with his brother Henry past the hermitage. "Hail, King," shouted Ulric from his pent-house; and Stephen, imagining the hermit had mistaken him for his royal uncle, drew bridle to explain. "It is no error," persisted the hermit, "it is you, Stephen, that I mean; for the Lord hath delivered the realm into your hand;" and then he prayed him, when

that day should come, to protect the Church and defend the poor.[1]

In spite, however, of expectation, intrigue, and prophecy, Stephen's enterprise was still a failure when he appeared before the gates of the capital. No noble had joined the scanty train of Flammands and Normans that followed him; no town had opened its gates. All hung on the decision of London; nor was it long uncertain what that decision would be. No sooner was the little troop in sight, than London poured out to meet it with uproarious welcome. By the side of the earl's charger, as they led him into the city, men leaped for joy in shouting how they had gotten "another Henry in Stephen."[2]

Somewhat of the warmth of this reception sprang, doubtless, from the need of a ruler, which London, more than all England, experienced. For the great mourning with which the city had received the news of Henry's death had been roughly interrupted by an event which recalled its own immediate peril. Just without the walls, a knight, who had occupied an inferior position in Henry's court, had availed himself of the interruption of the king's peace to gather a troop of marauders at his back, and to levy blackmail on the country round. The traders could see the pillage of their wains as they wound along the banks of the Thames, or struck eastward along the great

[1] *Acta Sanctorum Bolland.* iii. 226.
[2] *Gesta Steph.* p 3.

white road over good Queen Maud's bridge at Stratford; they could see the smoke and flame rising from their pleasant country-houses along the valley of the Fleet. With pillage at her gates, London wanted no far-off Lady, but a present King. "Every realm," the burghers urged in their folk-mote, "was open to mishap where the presence of all rule and head of justice was lacking. Delay was impossible in the election of a king, who was needed at once to restore justice and the law."[1] But the present danger only quickened feelings which had their root in the very history of London under the Conquest.

The Conquest had left London as free as it found it: its franchises remained as great under William as they had been under Edward. But it had planted in the very heart of the city, or, if not planted, had raised into far higher importance a wholly new element of civic life. London presents a strong contrast to most other great mercantile cities in the readiness she has ever shown, not only to admit, but to admit to full citizenship, the foreign elements which different ages have introduced. Englishman, Dane, Norman, Gascon, the stream of Flemish immigration flowing steadily from the Conquest on to the accession of the Stuarts, Germans of the Palatinate, Huguenots of Southern France, have clustered century after century round the old Roman Municipium. Long before the landing of William, the Normans had had mercantile establishments in London. In the

[1] *Gesta Steph.* pp. 3, 4.

Institutes drawn up under Ethelred the men of Rouen occupy a special position, inferior only to that of the men of the Emperor. But for the Conquest, however, their settlement would have remained a mere trading colony, such as the Hanse merchants for centuries after maintained in their London Steel-yard. Up to the Conquest, indeed, the position of the "Emperor's men" was even higher than that of the "men of Rouen," and had Henry V. annexed England, as at one time seemed possible, in right of his wife, the merchants of Köln or Bruges would have started into a civic importance such as the victory of Hastings gave to the Norman traders.

For the immediate effect of the Conquest was to increase the number of the settlers. It is a side of Norman history which has hardly received the notice it deserves, this peaceful invasion of the Norman industrial and trading classes which followed quick on the conquests of the Norman soldiery. Every Norman noble as he quartered himself on English lands, every Norman abbot as he entered his English cloister, gathered French artists or French domestics round him for his new castle or his new church. Around Battle, for instance, French dependents— "Gilbert the Foreigner, Gilbert the Weaver, Mauger the Smith, Benet the Steward, Hugh the Secretary, Baldwin the Tailor" — mixed with the English tenantry.[1] More especially was this the case with the capital. No sooner had London submitted to

[1] *Chron. de Bello*, pp. 14-16.

Duke William, than "many of the citizens of Rouen and Caen passed over thither, preferring to be dwellers in that city, inasmuch as it was fitter for their trading, and better stored with the merchandise in which they were wont to traffic."[1] A yet more important result of the Conquest lay in its giving the rapidly increasing colony a civic existence. It was impossible that the countrymen of the Conqueror should remain strangers in the Conqueror's capital. A curious monument of London's history tells us how quickly the change took place. In the archives of Guildhall is still preserved a little slip of parchment, in length and breadth hardly bigger than a man's thumb, scored with a few lines in the Old English tongue. It would be difficult to exaggerate the interest or the real importance of this relic—William's Charter to the Burgesses of London—when we remember that the liberties thus preserved became the model and precedent of the great bulk of English municipal charters, or how much of the future of England itself lay hid in the liberties of London. But the simple words of its opening indicate that, while possessing the full rights of citizenship and occupying in William's eyes a position even superior to the older English burgesses, the new colony still preserved its separate existence:—"William, King, greets Bishop William and Godfrey the Portgrave, and all the burgesses in London, Frenchmen and Englishmen, friendly."[2]

[1] Anon. Lambeth, Giles' *Beket*, ii. 73.
[2] *Liber Custumarum*, i. 25.

With one of these Norman burghers the life of St. Thomas brings us in contact, and scanty as are the details of the story, they agree in a very striking way with the indications afforded us by the charter of the king. The story of the early years of Thomas Beket has very naturally been passed over with little attention by his modern biographers in their haste to fight the battle of his after-career. But long before he became St. Thomas, Archbishop Thomas, or Thomas of Canterbury, he was known as Thomas of London, son (to use his own boast) of "a citizen living without blame among his fellow-citizens." So completely was the family adopted into the city, that the monks of Canterbury could beg loans from the burgesses on the plea that the great martyr was a Londoner born; and on the city seal of the fourteenth century London addressed him as at once her patron and her son, "Me, quæ te peperi, ne cesses, Thoma, tueri." The name of his father, Gilbert Beket, is one of the few that remain to us of the Portreves, the predecessors of the Mayors under Stephen; he held a large property in houses within the walls; and a proof of his civic importance was long preserved in the annual visit of each newly-elected chief magistrate to his tomb in the little chapel which he had founded in the churchyard of Paul's.[1] Yet Gilbert was one of the Norman strangers who followed in the wake of the Conqueror. He was by birth a burgher of Rouen, as his wife was of a burgher family of Caen; he claimed kinship with

[1] *Liber Albus*, p. 26.

the Norman Primate Theobald, and received the Norman Baron de l'Aigle as a guest.

But the story of the Bekets does more than illustrate the outer position of the Norman colony: it gives us a glimpse, the more precious because it is unique, of its inner life. Students of hagiology learn to be cautious about the stories of precocious holiness, the apocryphal gospels of the infancy, which meet him at the outset of most saints' lives; but it is remarkable that in the life of St. Thomas there is no pretension of the kind. In the stead of juvenile miracles, we are presented with the vivid little picture of a London home, which sets the Norman colony fairly before us. We see the very aspect of the house (the Mercers' Chapel, in Cheapside, still preserves its site for us), the tiny bedroom, the larger hall opening directly on the bustle of the narrow Cheap. We gain a hint from the costly coverlet of purple, sumptuously wrought, which Mother Rohese flings over her child's cradle, of the new luxury and taste which the Conquest had introduced into the home of the trader as into the castle of the noble. A glance at the guests and relatives of the family shows how the new colony served as a medium between the city and the court: the young Baron Richer of Aquila is often there, hunting and hawking with the boy as he grows up; Archdeacon Baldwin and Clerk Eustace look in from Canterbury, to chat over young Thomas and his chances of promotion in the curia of Archbishop Theobald; there is a kinsman, too, of Gilbert's, a

citizen of his own stamp, Osbern Huit-deniers, "of great name and repute, not only among his fellow-burghers, but also with those of the court."[1] Without the home, the Norman influence makes itself felt in a new refinement of manners and breeding; the young citizen grows up free and genial enough, but with a Norman horror of coarseness in his geniality.[2] London shares in the great impulse which the Conquest has given to education; the children of her citizens are sent to the new Priory of Merton; the burghers flock to the boys' exercises at the schools attached to the three principal churches of the town. The chief care of Rohese was for her son's education; in his case it is finished at Paris, before the young Londoner passes to the merchant's desk.

The little picture reflects for us very faithfully the double aspect of the new colony,—fully accepting their position among their fellow-citizens, but preserving jealously their Norman connection and Norman feeling; and able, from the lead which they necessarily took among the burghers, to give their Norman tone to civic policy. And in this great crisis of London history it was the Norman antipathy to the Angevin that told strongest for Stephen. For a whole century the bitterest of provincial feuds had severed Normandy from Anjou; and the marriage of policy by which Henry endeavoured to propitiate his most restless enemy only deepened the hatred of the

[1] Roger, apud Giles, *S. T. C.* i. 98.
[2] "Rusticitatis notam cavens." Anon. Lamb. *S. T. C.* ii. 74.

Normans by the fear of an Angevin master. Their awe of the king-duke hushed, but could not check, the stern resolve to reject his successor. No pages in Orderic's story of the time are more vivid than those in which he tells how Normandy rose as one man when Count Geoffry Plantagenet crossed the border on tidings of Henry's death, to claim the duchy in right of his wife; how the tocsin pealed from every steeple—how farmer and labourer poured out from cottage and grange—how the Angevin marauders, the hated "Guirribecs," were knocked on the head like sheep, and the proud count fled homeward through wood and ford, with loss of baggage and arms. It was hatred and dread of the Angevin that made Normandy offer herself and her dukedom to Theobald of Blois. May it not have been Norman hatred and dread of the Angevin that flung open the gates of London to Theobald's brother, Earl Stephen?

But the reception of Stephen was not merely the result of this hereditary hatred, this national aversion, —it was the effect also of the great religious impulse which England was now sharing with the whole of the Western world. The Angevin counts stood almost alone in bidding it defiance. To the stories, indeed, of Giraldus in his old age we are bound to give no greater credence than to a Royalist lampoon upon the Puritans, or a Jacobite libel on the House of Hanover. But the tenor of their history is everywhere the same. A lurid grandeur of evil, a cynical defiance of religious opinion, hung alike round Fulc

Nerra, or Fulc Rechin, or Geoffry Plantagenet. The priest-murder of Henry Fitz-Empress, the brutal sarcasms of Richard, the embassy of John to the Moslems of Spain, were but the continuance of a series of outrages on the religious feelings of the age which had begun long ere the lords of Anjou had become kings of England. One foul sacrilege of Geoffry Plantagenet, his brutal outrage on the Bishop of Le Mans, was still fresh in the memories of all. From outrages such as these Stephen was free. Rough soldier as he was, he was devout as devotion was understood then, a benefactor of churches, a founder of religious houses. In a word, he partook of the very spirit to which Geoffry and the Angevins stood so darkly opposed; he shared the great revival of religion which was nowhere more conspicuous, no where more important, than in England.

Pious, learned, and energetic as the bishops and abbots of William's appointment had been, they were not Englishmen. Till Beket's time, no Englishman occupied the throne of Canterbury; till Jocelyn, no Englishman occupied the see of Wells. In language, in manner, in sympathy, the higher clergy were completely severed from the lower priesthood and the people, and the whole influence of the Church, constitutional as well as religious, was for the moment paralysed. Lanfranc, indeed, exercised a great personal power over William, but Anselm stood alone against Rufus, and no voice of ecclesiastical freedom broke the simoniac silence of the thirty years of

Henry I. But in the latter days of Henry, and throughout the reign of Stephen, the people left thus without shepherds were stirred by the first of those great religious movements which England was destined afterwards to experience in the Preaching of the Friars, the Lollardism of Wycliffe, the Reformation, the Great Rebellion, and the mission-work of the Wesleys. Everywhere in town and country men banded themselves together for prayer, hermits flocked to the woods, noble and churl welcomed the austere Cistercians as they spread over the moors and forests of the North. A new spirit of enthusiastic devotion woke the slumber of the older orders, and penetrated alike to the home of the noble Walter d'Espec at Rievaulx, or of the trader Gilbert Beket in Cheapside. It is easy to be blinded in revolutionary times, such as those of Stephen, by the superficial aspects of the day; but, amidst the wars of the Succession, and the clash of arms, the real thought of England was busy with deeper things. We see the force of the movement in the new class of ecclesiastics that it forces on the stage. The worldliness that had been no scandal in Roger of Salisbury becomes a scandal in Henry of Winchester. The new men, Thurstan, and Ailred, and Theobald, and John of Salisbury — even Thomas himself — derive whatever weight they possess from sheer holiness of life or aim. Nor did the Revival affect merely the immediate course of affairs; it left its stamp on the very fabric of the English Constitu-

tion. The paralysis of the Church ceased as the new impulse bound together the prelacy and the people; and its action, as it started into a power strong enough to save England from anarchy, has been felt in our history ever since. The compact between king and people had become a part of constitutional law in the charters of William and Henry, but its legitimate consequence, in the responsibility of the Crown for the execution of the pact, was first drawn out by the ecclesiastical councils of Stephen's reign. From their depositions of Stephen and Matilda flowed the depositions of Edward, of Richard, and of James. Incoherent as their expression of it may at first sight appear, they did express the right of a nation to good government, till the dim, confused feeling took shape in the resolute efforts by which Theobald became at last the restorer of peace and freedom. To the Church —Beket had a plain right to say it afterwards with whatever proud consciousness of having been Theobald's right hand—to the Church Henry owed his crown, and England her deliverance.

London took even more than its share in the great Revival. The city was proud of its religion, of its thirteen greater conventual, and more than a hundred lesser parochial churches. "I don't think," says the Londoner, Fitz-Stephen, "there is a city in the world that has more praiseworthy customs in the frequenting church, respecting services, keeping feast-days, giving alms, betrothing, marrying, bury-

ing religiously." The new impulse was, in fact, changing the very aspect of the city. In its midst Bishop Richard was busy with the vast cathedral which Bishop Maurice had begun; barges came up the river with stone from Caen for the great arches that moved the popular wonder, while street and lane were being levelled to make space for the famous churchyard of St. Paul's. Rahere, the king's minstrel, was raising St. Bartholomew's beside Smithfield. Alfune had just built St. Giles's at Cripplegate. The old English Cnichtengild had surrendered their soke of Aldgate as a site for the new Priory of the Holy Trinity. The tale of this last house paints better than a thousand disquisitions the temper of the citizens at this time. Prior Norman, its founder, had built cloister and church, had bought books and vestments in so liberal a fashion that at last no money remained to buy bread. The canons were at their last gasp, when many of the city folk, looking into the refectory as they paced round the cloister in their usual Sunday procession, saw the tables laid out but not a single loaf on them. "Here is a fine set out," they exclaimed, "but where is the bread to come from?—'hic est pulcher apparatus sed panis unde veniet?'" The women present vowed at once to bring each a loaf every Sunday, and soon there was bread enough and to spare for the priory and its guests. Thenceforth the house grew, unvexed by mishaps, though a fire once swept eastward to its very walls—it was the

fire which, starting from the house of Gilbert Beket, involved London in ruin and himself in poverty.[1]

Among the women that brought bread to the canons may very possibly have been the mother of Beket. In religion, as in other matters, the little home reflects faithfully the tone of the colony of which it formed a part. However dimly Gilbert Beket passes before us—a civic dignitary, well to do till the great fire—his wife, Rohese, stands out distinctly as the type of the devout woman of her day, prayerful, not unaccustomed to visions, a pilgrim now and then to that Canterbury whose sanctity was so soon to be quickened into new life by the blood of her son; above all, diligent in almsgiving. The prettiest story in all that stormy life of St. Thomas is that birthday scene at home, where year by year the mother weighs her boy against money, clothes, provisions, and gives them to the poor.

This religious enthusiasm, and the dread (well-grounded, as it afterwards proved) that in the Angevins would be found the bitterest foes of religion and the Church, may have had some part in the uproarious reception of Stephen by the multitude of London. But the formal recognition which followed was based on far deeper grounds, and has a very different constitutional importance. Neither noble nor prelate, save Henry of Winchester, were there to constitute a

[1] Hearne has given the chronicle of this house in an Appendix to his William of Newburgh.

National Council; indeed, a week after, when all had gone well for Stephen, but a few nobles, three bishops, and not a single abbot could be mustered to make a show at the coronation. In this great crisis the Commune of London did not hesitate to take their place. In the election of a king, indeed, London had for some time taken a great constitutional part. When Ethelred's miserable life passed away "all the witan that were in London, and the burgesses, chose Eadmund to be their king" (*Chronicle*, ad 1016). On the death of Cnut the citizens joined with the Danes in raising Harold Harefoot to the throne, in opposition to Harthacnut. The burgesses and butsecarls had united with Archbishop Aldred in the vain attempt to make a king of the Etheling after the fatal defeat of Hastings. By the time of the Conquest London had become the definite place of the royal election, and the voice of her citizens was accepted as the representative of the popular assent. But the position which the citizens now took was a far greater one than this. In the absence of noble and bishop, they claimed of themselves the right of election. Undismayed by the want of the hereditary counsellors of the Crown, their "aldermen and wiser-folk gathered together the folk-mote, and these providing at their own will for the good of the realm, unanimously agreed to choose a king."[1]

[1] "Majores itaque natu, consultum quique vectiores consilium coegere, deque regni statu pro arbitrio suo utilia in commune providentes ad regem eligendum unanimiter conspiravere" (*Gesta Stephani*, p. 3).

The very arguments of the citizens are preserved to us as they stood massed, doubtless in the usual place for the folk-mote at the east end of Paul's, while the bell of the commune swung out its iron summons from the detached campanile beside. "Every kingdom," urged alderman and prud'homme, "was open to mishap where the presence of all rule and head of justice was lacking. It was no time for waiting; delay was in fact impossible in the election of a king, needed as he was at once to restore justice and the law." But quick on these general considerations followed the bolder assertion of a constitutional right of pre-election, possessed by London alone. "*Their* right and special privilege it was, that on their king's death his successor should be provided by *them;*" and if any, then Stephen, brought as it were by Providence into the midst of them, already on the spot.[1]

Bold as the claim was, none contradicted it; the solemn deliberation ended in the choice of Stephen, and amidst the applause of all the aldermen appointed him king.[2] Ample securities were taken for the safety of the realm; oath was exchanged against oath; the citizens swore to defend Stephen with money and blood; Stephen swore to apply himself with his whole strength to the pacification of the kingdom.[3]

[1] "Id quoque sui esse juris, suique specialiter privilegii, ut si rex ipsorum quoquo modo obiret, alius suo provisu in regno substituendus succederet" (*Gesta Stephani*, p. 4).

[2] "Regemque, omnium concordanti favore, constituere" (*Gesta Stephani*, p. 4).

[3] "Ad omnium eorundem suffragium" (*Gesta Stephani*, p. 4).

From that hour Stephen was king: supporters flocked in fast, and it was at the head of a large body of knights that he marched upon Winchester. But we need not follow the story further. London was true to *her* oath, if Stephen was false to his. But whatever might be the immediate result, with the solemn independent election of a king, the great part which London was to play in England's history had definitely begun. The London of the Normans, of Gilbert Beket, of St. Thomas, had taken its constitutional place in the realm.

BENEDICTUS ABBAS[1]

(1868)

THERE are few works of greater interest to historic scholars than the chronicle which has till now borne the name of Abbot Benedict of Peterborough. So far as its contents are concerned, it forms the primary authority for the reign of Henry II., a reign whose constitutional importance every day makes more evident, while in itself the book occupies a peculiar position in English literature. Nothing brings so clearly home the fulness and continuity of our national annals as the fact that from the reign of Alfred to the close of the Wars of the Roses there is but a single break, and that of but a few years, in the contemporary records of our mediæval history. From the ninth century to the midst of the twelfth extends what may be called the period of the vernacular English Chroniclers, the last of whom, with his Latin imitators of Worcester and Durham, flickers out in this darkest hour of feudal lawlessness.

[1] *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi Abbatis.* Edited by William Stubbs, M.A., Regius Professor of Modern History in the University of Oxford. London: Longmans and Co.

The larger and more philosophical school which began with William of Malmesbury continues indeed in the Canon of Newburgh; and so far as Norman affairs will allow the one and monastic business the other, Robert of Thorigny and Gervaise of Canterbury throw a certain tiny light upon the time. But practically there is a break in the series of our annalists till the opening of the present chronicle with the death of Archbishop Thomas, when the history of Benedict as re-edited by Hoveden becomes the fresh starting-point from which the successive chronicles of St. Albans continue their contemporary accounts of English affairs till the Wars of the Roses. But it is not this literary position alone which gives the chronicle its special value. It is, we have said, the primary authority for the reign of Henry II., and the ingenious conjecture of the present editor makes it extremely probable that its authorship is really owing to one of the most distinguished statesmen of Henry's Court. Abbot Benedict certainly ordered it to be copied for the library of Peterborough, but it seems to have acquired his name simply from a very natural blunder of Lord Burleigh's, and the striking similarity of its contents to those ascribed to the well-known "Tricolumnis" of the *Dialogus de Scaccario* points rather to the authorship of Richard Fitz-Neal, the Royal Treasurer and afterwards Bishop of London. A taste for history formed one of the strangely blended passions of the Angevin race, and in this respect Henry was no unworthy successor of

that very old ancestor of his, Fulk Rechin, whose autobiography has lately won the eulogy of Mr. Freeman. It would be pleasant enough to believe that the revival of English history was only a part of the general stimulus which the Angevins were everywhere giving to this branch of literature, and that the chronicle before us began in the circle of statesmen around Henry himself. It is at any rate clearly the production of no mere monastic annalist, but of one closely connected with the Court, and Professor Stubbs has well pointed out the singular value of such a position to the mediæval historian.

The man who undertook to register the actions and movements of those whose lives make up history must be in a position to witness or to have a speedy report of all. He must either follow the Court or live in the capital. In the twelfth century the communication of news was slow, while the action of princes was rapid. To ensure perfect accuracy the chronicler must be attached to the king's person; to ensure approximate accuracy he must be where the reports of the king's proceedings would be first received. The wonderful coincidences in chronological details which may be traced in contemporary writers who had no apparent communication with one another — as, for instance, Hoveden, Gervase, and Ralph de Diceto—and the way in which they illustrate and supplement one another, are proofs both of great pains taken to ensure exact intelligence, and of a publicity in the conduct of affairs which we are accustomed to connect almost exclusively with the existence of newspapers.

To these advantages would naturally be added that of almost official access to State documents, the reports of ambassadors, or letters from foreign princes —a privilege which became of greater moment from

the wider reach which the policy and connections of Henry and his sons gave at this time to the relations of England with the world. By the extent of his Continental dominions, by the cousinship in which, as Mr. Stubbs puts it, his family connections bound up the whole Continent, by his widespread alliances with the Empire or Spain, by the constant references which were made to him on the part of political disputants, the statesmen of Henry Fitz-Empress were brought into some contact or other with every part of Christendom. Chronicles like the present one acquire, in this accidental way, almost the same general character at which William of Malmesbury had aimed from a more philosophical standpoint; and such a collection as that of Hoveden is "an authority not only for the history of England, but for that of France, Flanders, Germany, Italy, Spain, the Papacy, Norway, Palestine, and even Constantinople; and this not merely in default of national historians, as in the cases of Norway and Palestine, but as harmonising with and completing their narratives, where they exist, with an independent authority."

Valuable as such a chronicle must necessarily be, the extracts we have already given prove how much Lord Romilly has added to the worth of his gift by his good sense in entrusting its editing to the one scholar in England who is pre-eminently fitted for the task. The terse, pregnant notes which some apparent relaxation of the older rule of the series has allowed Professor Stubbs to add to the text, the biblio-

graphical research of the first preface, and the elaborate picture of the character and policy of the Angevins which occupies the second, are all equally admirable. Such a note, for instance, as that in which the very puzzling chronology of the home transactions in 1191—transactions whose political importance has hitherto been unnoticed by our historians—is definitely cleared up, and indeed the whole of the brief comments with which Mr. Stubbs has accompanied the annals of the reign of Richard, are of the highest value. It is, however, in his sketch of the character of Henry II. that the editor has evidently put forth his fullest powers, and it was precisely to such a character that his own intellectual temper enables him to do justice. His mind appears to be pre-eminently fair and judicial, and in the adulation and caricature of Peter of Blois, Gerald of Wales, and Ralph the Black, there is an admirable field for judgment and fairness. Even under the hand of a professed panegyrist, as the Professor remarks, the moral and intellectual traits of Henry, like his physical characteristics, refuse to combine "into the outlines of a hero." There was something about the build and look of the man—the square stout frame, the fiery face, the close-cropped hair, the prominent eyes, the bull neck, the coarse strong hands, the bowed legs—that sets romance at defiance. But it was a practical, serviceable frame, that just suited the hardest worker of his time. "He never sits down," is the most living among all the touches

of a contemporary pencil; "he is always on his legs from morning till night." Orderly in business, careless in appearance, moderate in diet, never resting or giving his servants rest; chatty, inquisitive, endowed with a singular charm of address and strength of memory, obstinate in love and hatred, a fair scholar, a great hunter, his general air "rough, passionate, uneasy," Henry was the very picture of a hard practical man of business on a royal scale:—

> We see (says the editor) a hard-headed, industrious, cautious, subtle, restless man; fixed in purpose, versatile in expedients, wonderfully rapid in execution, great in organising without being himself methodical—one who will always try to bind others while leaving himself free; who never prefers good faith to policy, or appearances to realities; who trusts rather to time and circumstances than to the goodwill of others; by inclination parsimonious and retiring, but on occasion lavish and magnificent; liberal in almsgiving, splendid in building, but not giving alms without an ulterior object, nor spending money on buildings except where he can get his money's worth. As with treasure, so with men: he was neither extravagant nor sparing, rather economical than humane; pitiful after the slaughter of battle, but not chary of human life where it could be spent with effect.

It is impossible to spend too much pains in understanding the temper of Henry, because in few cases has personal character so moulded the character of a reign. Mr. Stubbs has well pointed out in what a great crisis of England's history this keen, restless, coarse-fibred man of business was destined to be her king. His reign forms the period of amalgamation, when neighbourhood and traffic and intermarriage

were drawing Englishman and Norman together so rapidly into one people that by its close the two races had almost ceased to be distinguishable from each other. A national feeling indeed was springing up here, as over Europe generally, before which the conventional barriers of feudalism were to be swept away. Henry had even less reverence for that feudal past than his times, and much of his work was to lie in the organisation of judicial and administrative forms which should supersede its own. But of the great currents of thought and feeling which were tending in the same direction he knew nothing. He had, in fact, less insight into them, less sympathy with them, than the meanest peasant of his day. A great revival of the religious consciousness went on under the very eyes of a king who whispered and scribbled and looked at picture-books during mass, who neglected confession, and cursed God in a wild frenzy of blasphemy. On both sides of the sea, great peoples formed themselves round a sovereign whose whole mind, powerful as it was, was set on the acquisition of half a dozen little French towns. There is a tragic grandeur in the irony of Henry's position in the midst of it all—a Sforza of the fifteenth century set in the midst of the twelfth, building up, by patience and policy and craft, a composite empire alien to the deepest sympathies of his age, and in the end swept away in ignominy and despair by popular forces to whose existence his very cleverness had blinded him. What Henry directly

did towards the great moral and social revolution of the twelfth century was simply to let it alone. But indirectly and unconsciously, as we have said, his policy did much to prepare England for the change. If by the charge of "tyranny," which his enemies brought against him, is meant wanton cruelty or oppression or purposeless outrages on law and public order, Henry II., as Mr. Stubbs pleads, was certainly no tyrant. But there is a good deal in the older and purely Greek sense of the word that harmonises with his temper and designs. He was utterly without the imagination and reverence which could enable him to sympathise with the past. He had a practical man's impatience of the obstacles thrown in the way of his reforms by the older constitution of his realm. He could not understand other men's reluctance to purchase undoubted improvements by the sacrifice of customs and traditions of bygone days. Without any theoretical hostility to the co-ordinate powers of the State, it seemed to him a perfectly reasonable and natural course to trample under foot the Baronage or the Church to gain his end of good government. His notions of government, in fact, were precisely those of the great group of rulers in the fifteenth century—the notions of Ferdinand and Louis XI. and Henry VII.; but in the twelfth century they were a sheer anachronism. The power of the Crown, raised so high by the first of our Angevin sovereigns, lay ruined at the feet of the third. From John to the first of the Tudors, the rule of England lay, not

with the Crown, but with the ecclesiastical and aristocratic forces which Henry had trodden under foot. We cannot agree with the author of the preface, therefore, in the favourable estimate which he forms of Henry's policy, though we are grateful to him for the clearness with which he has developed its character. There are few things more mischievous than a right thing done at a wrong time, and of Henry's designs few survived the rule of his sons. What he did bequeath to the England of the future were the incidental results which have been ably summed up by Professor Stubbs :—

> The idea of a kingly government administered by the king's servants, in which the action of the feudal nobility where it existed was simply ministerial, and was not, so far as the executive was concerned, even necessary to the maintenance of the plan, was the true remedy for the evils of anarchy inherent in the Norman State. Such a system could not be devised by a weak or ambitious head, or worked by feeble or indolent hands. Nor could it be brought to maturity or easy action in one man's lifetime. The elements of discord were not extinguished in Henry's reign, they broke out whenever any other trouble distracted the king's energy or divided his power. Still he was in the main successful, and left to his successors the germ of a uniform administration of justice and system of revenue. His ministers, who at the beginning of his reign were little more than officers of his household, at the end of it were the administrators of the country. The position of England in the affairs of Europe was from this time owing, not to the foreign possessions of the sovereign, but to the compactness of her organisation, and the facility with which the national strength and resources could be handled.

THE BAN OF KENILWORTH (DICTUM DE KENELWORTHA)[1]

(1864)

From the slaughter of Evesham, where liberty lay, it seemed, dead with De Montfort, to the Statutes of Marlborough, where the very spirit of the great Earl and of freedom is alive again, our modern historians pass quietly on without once pausing to ask the cause or nature of so great a revolution. And yet it is not the mere sharpness and vividness of the contrast which gives weight to these memorable years, they are of weight in themselves; they form the transition period between the two great sections of our history, the period which severs that age of formation, during which a succession of new peoples and customs and ideas were slowly mingling and fusing into fresh forms and combinations, from the six centuries of true national history which stretch thence to the England of to-day. It is in fact in the Dictum, the Award, or, to take the older English word,[2] the

[1] Communicated to the Historical Section at the Annual Meeting of the Archæological Institute held at Warwick, July 1864.

[2] Robert of Glocester terms it thus, p. 568.

"Ban" of Kenilworth, that great national act which these historians in like intelligent fashion dwarf into a mere capitulation, that the key of this great question must be found.

For the history of the events which led to it, over which I must necessarily hurry, and of the Dictum itself, on which I shall venture to dwell at greater length, the authorities are unusually numerous and valuable. The chroniclers divide into two great classes: we have first the adherents of the National party, Rishanger in his chronicle (Camden Soc. 1840), and in the continuation of Matthew Paris (Wats, 1644), the annalist of Waverley (Gale, Script. in vol. ii.), Robert of Glocester (Lond. 1810), the chronicler of Melrose (Gale, vol. i.). On the other side are the Royalists, Wikes (Gale, vol. ii.), Westminster (Lond. 1570), the chronicler in the *Liber de Antiquis Legibus* (Camden Soc.). All these are contemporaries, some were eye-witnesses of the events which they relate, and, with the exception of the historian of Melrose on the one side and Matthew of Westminster on the other,[1] are all, allowing for their strong party bias, thoroughly trustworthy. Nangis (Duchesne, *Hist. Fr. Script.* vol. v.) gives a very valuable French view of some of the transactions of the time; but the great supplement to and check upon the chroniclers must be found in our national records, which I have been

[1] At least two different accounts are obviously confused together by Matt. of Westminster, and his chronology is even more erroneous than his facts. Lingard, however, follows it. Parry (*Hist. of Parliaments*) is equally misled.

enabled by the courtesy of Mr. Burtt (though far too cursorily) to examine, the Patent and Close rolls, and in the collection of royal letters.[1] These not only furnish us with facts, but enable us often to form a decision amid the embarrassing discord of the chroniclers. To pass at once to the story.

On the morning of the 4th of August 1265, Sir Simon de Montfort, marching through the night from Kenilworth to his father's relief, reached the little town of Alcester at the confluence of the Alne and the Arrow. The delay caused by Edward's masterly surprise of his army under the castle walls had been more than compensated by the opportunity afforded by his absence to the Earl of Leicester of breaking the line of the Severn. Severn crossed, the night-march of 3rd August had brought the Earl as far as Evesham; he was now only some ten miles distant from the relieving army down the Vale of Avon, and the junction of father and son seemed secure. The Earl, however, listened, reluctantly indeed, to King Henry's request, and halted at Evesham for mass and dinner: the army of Sir Simon halted for the same purpose at Alcester. "Those two dinners doleful were, alas!"[2] for Prince Edward was hurrying through the night by country cross-lanes to seize the fatal gap which they had left. As the morning broke his army lay across the road that led northward from Evesham to Alcester. Ere three hours had passed the corpse

[1] Wherever these have been printed by Brady or Rymer, I have referred to their collections.

[2] Robert of Glocester, p. 558. *Ann. of Waverley*, p. 219.

of the great Earl lay mangled amid a ring of faithful knights, and the "murder of Evesham, for battle none it was," was over.

Simon de Montfort's army, after finishing its meal, was again on its march to join the Earl when the news met it, heralded by that strange darkness that, rising suddenly in the north-west and following as it were on Edward's track, served to shroud the mutilations and horrors of the battle-field.[1] The news was soon fatally confirmed. Simon himself could see from afar the noble head of that great father borne off on a spear-point to be mocked at Wigmore.[2] His retreat was uninterrupted: the pursuit had streamed naturally away southward and westward, through the streets of Tewkesbury heaped with corpses of the panic-stricken Welchmen whom the townsmen had slaughtered without ruth or pity; and amid the darkness and the big thunder-drops the army fell despairingly back on Kenilworth. "I may hang up mine axe," are the bitter words attributed by the poet to their leader, "for feebly have I gone."[3] Once within the castle he gave way to a wild sorrow, day after day tasting neither meat nor drink,[4] till he was roused into action again by a great emergency. The news of the shameful indignities offered by Mautravers and the Marchers to the corpse of the great Earl before whom they had trembled so long, had at last reached the garrison at Kenilworth, and the knights broke out

[1] Rob. of Gloc. saw it, "and was well sore aferd" (p. 560).
[2] Wikes, p. 71. [3] Rob. Gloc. p. 561. [4] Wikes, p. 71.

in a passionate burst of fury such as we see in the story of Becket's murder.[1] Richard of Cornwall, his son, and some of his knights were prisoners in the castle, and the garrison clamoured for their blood. Simon had enough nobleness and self-restraint to interpose. "To God and him alone was it owing," owned his uncle afterwards, "that I was snatched from death."[2]

It was noble, for no mercy could be looked for from the conquerors. Fresh from the butchery of the fugitives in the corn-fields and gardens of Evesham, the Royalists flung themselves on their foes with the wild licence of victory. The triumphant blare of trumpets which welcomed the delivered king into Evesham, "his men weeping for joy,"[3] rang out in bitter contrast to the universal mourning.[4] It was the inauguration of a reign of terror. The rights and laws for which men had toiled and fought so long seemed swept away in an hour. England, in the words of her anonymous poet,[5] was—

> Nescia venturi cujus sit subdita juri,
> Sub quo custode, sub Christo vel sub Herode.

Every town which had supported Earl Simon—and what town had not?—was held to be at the King's mercy, its franchises to be forfeited.[6] The charter of Lynn was annulled, Oxford was heavily fined, London was marked out as the special object of the King's

[1] Rishanger, p. 50.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] Wikes, p. 71.
[4] Rishanger, p. 48.
[5] Quoted by Halliwell. *Notes to Rishanger's Chronicle*, p. 144.
[6] Contin. Matt. Paris, ad ann. 1266.

vengeance, and the farms and merchandise of its burghers seized as first-fruits of its plunder. The darkness which on that fatal morning had hidden their books from the monks of Evesham as they sang in the choir, was but a presage of the gloom that was to fall on the religious houses.[1] From Ramsey, from Evesham, from St. Albans, rose the same cry of havoc and rapine. But this was little to the sweeping sentence of confiscation which was assumed to have passed by the mere fact of rebellion on all the adherents of Earl Simon. To disinherit these was to seize the estates of half the landed gentry of England. "Exhæredati," says the anonymous poet, "si fiant connumerati, millia cum binis deca bis sunt acta ruinis."[2] The Royalists, however, did not scruple to declare these twenty thousand disinherited, nor the king to lavish their lands away on favourites and foreigners. The very chronicles of their party recall the pillage with shame.[3] But all thought of resistance lay hushed in the universal terror. Every prison, save those of Dover and Kenilworth, opened its gates to the prisoners of Lewes.[4] The wife of Hugh Despenser flung open the dungeons of the Tower, and fled weeping to the protection of her father, Philip Basset. Even at Kenilworth Simon "saw no other rede"[5] than to release his prisoners.

[1] Rishanger, p. 47. [2] *Ibid.* p. 145.

[3] "Rex et sui complices non sicut decuerat cautiores effecti sed potius stultiores . . . non solum possessiones . . . indigenis sed et alienigenis sine personarum discretione concessit" (Wikes, p. 74).

[4] *Lib. Antiq. Leg.* p. 76. [5] Rob. Gloc. p. 561.

But other motives than mere panic influenced Simon in this release. His captives were set free on the 6th of September,[1] two days before the date of convocation for the Parliament at Winchester. The mere assembly of a Parliament seemed to promise an end to the present reign of utter lawlessness. It was known too that in the Royalist camp itself a powerful party existed, headed by Prince Edward and Earl Gilbert de Clare, which, however hostile to De Montfort, shared his love for English liberties. By his release of the prisoners of Kenilworth, Simon added to their ranks the wise and moderate Richard King of the Romans, and that prince returned the obligation by a promise, under his hand and seal, to exert his influence in favour of the Countess of Leicester, of Simon's brothers also, and of himself.

For the moment, however, all wise and moderate counsels were of little avail. The Parliament met in the usual temper of a Restoration Parliament, only to legalise the outrages of the past month. The embittered prisoners, fresh from the dungeons of the Barons, poured into Winchester to add fresh violence to the demands of the Marchers. The very wives of the captive loyalists and the widows of the slain were summoned to give fresh impulse to the reaction. Their place of meeting added fuel to the fiery passions thus heaped together, for Winchester yet bore the marks of its pillage by Simon on his way to Kenilworth, and its stubborn loyalty must have been

[1] Rob. Gloc. p. 561.

fanned into a flame by the losses it had endured. In such an assembly no voice of moderation could find a hearing: the four prelates who favoured the national cause, the Bishops of London and Lincoln, of Worcester and Chichester, were excluded: the heads of the religious houses were summoned for the mere purpose of extortion. The efforts of King Richard and Edward were met by those of Edmund, Henry's second son, who, unsated with the gift of the lands and honours of Earl Simon, placed himself with Mortimer and Giffard at the head of the ultra-loyalists.[1] The four resolutions passed were but the legalisation of their violence; all grants made during the King's captivity were revoked; the De Montforts were banished; the charter of London was annulled; the adherents of Earl Simon were disinherited, and seizin of their lands given to the King. Henry at once appointed commissioners[2] to survey and take possession of his spoil, while he moved to Windsor to triumph in the humiliation of London. Its mayor and forty of the chief citizens waited in the castle-yard amid the jeers of squires and grooms, only in defiance of their safe-conduct to be thrown into prison, and Henry entered his capital in triumph, as into an enemy's city.[3] The surrender of Dover came to fill the cup of victory; it was by this port that the foreign auxiliaries whom Richard and Amaury de Montfort had sailed with the Earl's treasure to

[1] Rishanger, p. 49. [2] *Fœdera*, i. p. 462.

[3] See the full account of the London transactions in *Lib. Ant. Leg.* p. 77, etc.

enlist, were designed to land; while in itself it headed the formidable league of the Cinque Ports. "On the sea," writes Edward of them, in August, "they commit a thousand piracies and murders; nor is any one suffered to land unless he be first conducted to Dover, and his arrival approved by its inhabitants."[1] A rising of its prisoners compelled its surrender in October, and the success of the Royalists seemed complete.[2]

In fact, their difficulties were but beginning. Their triumph over Earl Simon had been a triumph over the religious sentiment of their time, and religion avenged itself in its own way. Everywhere the Earl's death was viewed as a martyrdom, and monk and friar, however they might quarrel on other points, united in praying for the souls of the dead as for "soldiers of Christ." Within a short time after Evesham[3] it began to be whispered that Heaven had attested the sanctity of De Montfort by miracles at his tomb. How great was the effect of this belief may be seen in the request of the Arbitrators of Kenilworth to King and Pope for the suppression of these miracles; in the efforts for their suppression throughout the reign of Edward the First; in their continuance into the reign of his successor.[4] Their immediate result was a sudden revival of hope. "Sighs," breaks out Rishanger,[5] "are changed into

[1] Royal Letters, Hen. III. p. 406.
[2] Wikes, p. 72. [3] Rishanger, p. 48.
[4] An inquiry was made in this reign into the miracles worked at Henry de Montfort's tomb. [5] Rishanger, p. 49.

songs of praise, and the greatness of our former joy has come to life again." Nor was it in miracles alone that the "faithful," as they proudly styled themselves, began to look for relief from "the oppression of the Malignants."[1] The same Parliament which by its decrees of exile robbed Simon of any hope of accommodation provided him with an army by its decrees of disinherison. In the first moment of the reaction he had quitted Kenilworth and joined John d'Eyvill and Baldwin de Wake in the Isle of Axholme. So fast did foot and horse flow in to him, that Edward and his cousin Henry of Almaine hurried into Lincolnshire to hold him in check. But already the south and the west were backing the resistance in the north; the men of the Cinque Ports, putting on board their wives and children, swept the seas and harried the coast;[2] while Llewellyn, whose raid upon Chester had caused the hasty dissolution of the Parliament of Winton, butchered without mercy the routed fragments of the host sent against him.[3] Rishanger himself, penning his grand eulogy of Earl Simon quietly amongst all the uproar, saw the rise of the new spirit of resistance in the streets of St. Albans.[4] The town (these details of the story light up the time) was diligently guarded and strongly closed with bolts and bars within and without, and in its dread of war refused entrance to all strangers wishing to pass through, above all to horsemen. The Constable

[1] "A pressura malignantium." Rishanger, p. 49.
[2] *Annals of Waverley*, p. 221.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 220.
[4] Cont. Matt. Par. ad ann. 1265.

of Hertford, Henry de Stok, was an old foe of the townsmen; he boasted that in spite of bolts and bars he would enter the place, and carry off four of their best villeins captive to Hertford. He contrived to make his way in, and loitered foolishly about. A butcher passing by overheard him ask his followers how the wind stood; and guessing his design to burn the town he knocked him down. The blow gave heart to the townsmen, they secured De Stok and his followers, struck off their heads, and fixed them at the four corners of the borough.

In this moment of reaction, the Legate Ottobuoni landed with the Queen,[1] bringing with him the calm, wise policy of Rome. In the hour of their triumph Pope Clement had been a bitter enemy of the Barons; immediately on his accession he had dispatched Cardinal Ottobuoni to preach a crusade against them, to form a league of princes for the defence of "the common cause of kings," and to induce Louis of France to put himself at the head of it. But with their overthrow his tone changed. "Tristia nobis et læta enarrastis," he wrote in reply to the news of Evesham. Henceforth congratulations on the Royal successes[2] merely serve as preludes for earnest exhortations to moderation and clemency. "Clemency," wrote the Pope to Henry, on 25th October, "is the strength of a realm. . . . Forgiveness will win more to love you and your son than punishment and harshness. . . . If the heat of vengeance represses the hatred of a few,

[1] Nov. 1, *Ann. of Waverley*, p. 221. [2] Rymer, i. p. 463.

it goads that of the many." Clement had accompanied his letter of absolution to Earl Gilbert with like exhortations to assist the King and Prince Edward, but also anxiously to study the peace of the realm, and to exhort them to clemency. It was Edward's severity that Clement seemed most to fear, and to him he wrote in yet stronger appeal. "It is against yourself that you are cruel when you are cruel towards your people; it is your own power that you diminish. . . . Rather knit their hearts to you by benefits; by these win over your foes, that so of traitors you may make liege men, and of enemies friends." Noble words, and destined to find in Edward one noble enough to understand them. In the first flush of victory Edward had stood alone in desiring the captivity of the Earl and his sons, against the cry of the Marchers for their blood.[1] He had wept over the corpse of his old playfellow, Henry de Montfort, and had followed the Earl, his uncle, to the tomb. If his brother Edmund joined Mortimer and the other loyalists, Edward took his stand resolutely with the party of moderation and peace. He had marched, as we have seen, to stem the rising in the north. On his arrival at Axholme, he at once entered into negotiations with his cousin, and, adding the solicitations of the Queen and the legate to his own, prevailed on him to quit the island and appear before the King.[2] There Richard of Cornwall welcomed him as the saviour of his life; he presented

[1] Nangis, p. 372. [2] Rishanger, p. 50.

him to his brother, and Henry gave him the kiss of peace.[1] In spite of the opposition of the Marchers, conscious that however from the blood-connection between them the court might wish to save the De Montforts, yet that between Simon and the men who had sworn his father's death and mangled his father's corpse no terms were possible, success seemed on the point of crowning this bold stroke of the peace party, when Earl Gilbert interposed. His position was indeed most difficult. He had not fought against liberty, he had bound Edward by oath to preserve it, ere he entered with him on this campaign. He had wrested a like promise from Henry in the very hour of exultation after Evesham. So conscious was he that neither his love of liberty nor his past struggles for it could ever really be forgiven by the Royalists, that he had thought it wise to obtain a formal pardon for his share in the victory of Lewes from the King,[2] and a release from his excommunication at the hands of the Pope. But, if distrusted by the conquerors, he was hated by the conquered.[3] It was his treason to which they attributed the ruin of their cause. Above all, he, the pupil of De Montfort, had sworn the Earl's death; the blood of the father lay between him and the sons; the safety of the one lay in the ruin of the other. In the face of the more pressing danger, Earl Gilbert threw his weight into the scale of the Marchers, and peace became

[1] For the two sides of a contested story see Wikes, p. 73, and *Annals of Waverley*, p. 221.

[2] *Fœdera* i. p. 464.

[3] Rishanger, p. 51.

impossible. The question was shelved by a reference to arbitrators; Simon, so his party complained, was detained in spite of his safe-conduct, and moved in the train of the Royal army at Christmas from Northampton to witness the surrender of Kenilworth, which had been stipulated in the original terms of agreement as the price of his reconciliation with the King.

The castle was the one great obstacle that remained to a general peace. As early as August 1265, Edward had enclosed, in a letter to Roger Leyburne, a list of the chiefs of its garrison and a summons to surrender. "Et cum sint nonnulli in castro de Kenilleworth quos possumus et debemus nostros inimicos merito reputare, quorum nomina vobis mittimus præsentibus annotata, existimatur pariter expediens ipsis fore scribendum ex parte nostri domini supradicti ut, si nolint inimici publici reputari et exhæredari ac vitam perdere, prout meruerunt, dictum castrum committant sine morâ quâlibet nostro domino et assignent, nec ista littera alii quam religioso deferenda committatur."[1] But the garrison attracted no special attention till the departure of Simon for Axholme at the close of November. It seems to have been part of the plan of the campaign on which he entered that the castle should by increased activity draw down on itself the attention and efforts of the Royalists, and thus give the insurgents in the north time to take the field in arms. Immediately,

[1] Royal Letters, Hen. III. 406.

therefore, on his departure, the garrison scoured the country, ravaging cruelly on all sides, and sweeping such a store of provisions into the castle as would suffice, they boasted, for seven years' consumption. Every day brought new troops of the Disinherited to swell their numbers, and, pressing as was the danger from Simon at Axholme, the attitude of Kenilworth appeared so formidable to the Royalists that on the 10th of December the King dispatched from Windsor a summons to his nobles to meet him at Northampton for a campaign against the castle, and from Northampton, on the 26th, he directed Osbert Giffard to raise the posse comitatus of Oxfordshire and Warwickshire "ad gravandum et expugnandum illos qui se tenent in castro de Kenelworth."[1] The sudden appearance of Simon in the Royal camp and his offer to surrender the castle promised to end the matter, but the opposition of Earl Gilbert had changed the face of affairs, and it was, in his own belief, as a man betrayed and a prisoner that Simon was led before the castle to perform his part of the contract. The reply of the garrison to the Royal summons shows that they understood his situation, and freed him from the responsibility of their refusal. They had received ward of the castle, they answered, not from Simon but from the Countess, and to none living save to her, in her presence, would they surrender it.[2] Adroitly as the refusal was framed it was not likely to make Simon's position an easier

[1] Rymer, i. p. 467. [2] Rishanger, p. 51.

one. Immediately on his arrival in London the award was announced, binding him to quit the realm, and not to return save with the assent of king and baronage when all was again at peace. No formal acceptance seems to have been given, and Simon remained in free custody at London; but sinister rumours, probably the work of the ultra-Royalists whose great aim it was to get rid of him, reached his ears, and, warned at length that he was doomed to perpetual imprisonment,[1] he resolved to escape. On the night of Ash-Wednesday he stole cautiously out of London with his men and hastened to Winchelsea,[2] where the citizens were expecting his arrival. His escape gave a new vigour to the war. Llewellyn wasted the Border; the Cinque Ports ravaged more mercilessly than ever; the garrison of Kenilworth pushed their invasions even to Oxford, and the Disinherited again rose in the north. It was spring-time, when, as Wikes expresses it,[3] the vast forests which then covered the country "clothed themselves in their covert of leaves," and it was easy for outlaws to live under the greenwood tree. Baldwin de Wake and John de Eyvil, both of them brothers of knights in garrison at Kenilworth, and the latter a prisoner at Evesham who had but recently escaped, threw themselves, with a numerous band of followers, into the wood of "Suffeld frith," and harried with fire and sword the counties of the north and the eastern

[1] Rob. Glocest. p. 564. [2] *Waverley*, p. 221.
[3] Wikes, p. 75.

coast; Sir Adam Gurdon, a knight of gigantic size and renowned prowess, wasted at the head of a smaller band the shires of the south. In almost every county of the kingdom bands of outlaws were seeking their very existence in rapine and devastation,[1] while the Royal treasury was empty, and London's enormous fine had been only swept into the coffers of the French usurers.

But a strong hand was at the head of affairs, and Edward met his innumerable assailants with untiring energy. Henry of Almaine, son of the King of the Romans, was sent with a large force to the north; Mortimer to the defence of the Welsh border; three or four men were levied from every township in Oxfordshire and Berks to garrison Oxford. Edmund, the King's second son,[2] was dispatched to Warwick to hold the Kenilworth knights in check. Edward himself and Earl Gilbert hurried on Sir Simon's track to secure the sea-ports by which foreign auxiliaries could be introduced. Throwing out scouts in all directions, he fell, on the 7th of March, suddenly on Winchelsea.[3] The surprise was complete. Many of the citizens were slain; many rushing in wild panic to their boats were drowned, and their leader, Henry Pedeu, fell into Edward's hands.[4] His life was spared by Earl Gilbert's advice, and Edward made use of him as an agent for the reconciliation of the Cinque Ports. The success of this policy of moderation was immediate.

[1] Wikes, p. 75. [2] *Ibid.* p. 76. [3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Annals of Waverley*, p. 221.

The most obstinate of Henry's opponents submitted in a week, for on the 15th of March the Cinque Ports accepted a peace whose terms were a presage of the coming Dictum.[1] They were promised a complete oblivion of the past, freedom from all forfeiture, the confirmation of their charters and privileges. "For what reason these concessions were made I know not," growls the Royalist scribe of the *Liber de Antiquis Legibus*, and the growl no doubt echoes the general sentiment of his party. Heeding nothing of their discontent, Edward held on his way, scouring the south with the same mixture of caution and alacrity, clearing the woods of Berkshire, dispersing Adam Gurdon's band at Whitsuntide, and capturing their renowned leader. The day before this close of the insurrection in the south had seen the last blow given to the rising in the north. Henry of Almaine fell on the knights at Chesterfield while the bulk of them were hunting in the woods; of the two leaders who remained in the town, D'Eyvill cut his way out and escaped, Earl Ferrars, "sick with gout and other woes," was taken in his bed. The band dispersed, some keeping to the woods, others, amongst whom was Henry of Hastings, making their way to Kenilworth.[2]

All was now free for the great siege. Edmund Crouchback had held Warwick in the face of the garrison, but he had been able to do little to check

[1] *Lib. Ant. Leg.* p. 83.

[2] "Sir Henry of Hastings to Keningworthe drew and found there fair company of good men inou" (Rob. Gloc.), p. 565.

its insolence. The news of Simon's escape to France had filled the knights with hope;[1] they raised his standard,[2] boasted of the letters they had received from him,[3] and awaited eagerly the foreign auxiliaries which the family of De Montfort were making strenuous efforts to raise.[4]

The Countess had retired to the Dominican nunnery at Montargis, but her sons were actively employed in raising money and men. Guy de Montfort, their father's elder brother, had married Petronilla, Countess of Bigorre in her own right, and this county their son, Eskivat, unable to defend it against the Gascons, had granted in 1250 to his powerful uncle, Earl Simon. In October 1265, the Countess and her son Simon, as yet still in England, surrendered it to Thibault, King of Navarre and Count of Champagne, probably to provide means for the army which the brothers, now united in France, were endeavouring to raise. The King seems to have entertained considerable apprehension of their efforts: the grant made to Prince Edward in April 1266, of "all foreigners and merchants from beyond sea desiring to come into and abide in this our realm," and the directions to suffer none such to travel or traffic without special license were probably intended to provide against Sir Simon's spies;[5] while in May the King's fears broke out in a writ from Northampton to all bailiffs and barons of his ports: "Cum Symon

[1] Wikes, p. 76. [2] Westminster, p. 343.
[3] Wikes, p. 77. [4] Rishanger, pp. 53, 54.
[5] Rymer, i. p. 468.

de Monteforte et complices et fautores sui, inimici nostri, cum multitudine armatorum quos sibi jam colligunt in partibus Gallicanis regnum nostrum hostiliter ingredi proponant, ut accepimus, ad idem regnum nostrum perturbandum et iteratam guerram in eodem de novo suscitandam," they were to keep guard against invaders day and night.[1]

The bold attitude of the Kenilworth garrison, their hopes of foreign aid, and the universal outburst of the spring, had changed the temper of the Royal camp. The exultation of Evesham had sunk into despondency. Ottobuoni had applied for permission to abandon his hopeless mission, and the Pope, while reproving him for his cowardice, left it at his discretion to stay or to go.[2] Henry himself gave the strongest sign of his wish to conciliate popular favour in the relaxation of his grasp upon London, and by dispatching a writ from the camp enabling the citizens to elect their own sheriffs. The reception of the writ showed how within the city, late so panic-stricken, the old spirit of freedom had revived; the popular party met the nomination of William Fitz-Richard by the King's friends with a tumultuous demand for the release of their leaders. "Nay, nay," they shouted, "we will have no mayor but Thomas Fitz-Thomas; him we will have freed from prison with his fellows that be at Windsor," and a popular rising against the magnates was only prevented by the armed inter-

[1] Rymer, i. p. 468.

[2] Papal MS. in Brit. Mus., quoted Milman, *Lat. Christ.* vol. v. 71, notes.

position of Roger Leyburne.[1] The same new spirit showed itself in the Royal army on its gathering at Oxford in the middle of April. Though the summons against Kenilworth had been specially proclaimed at every market-cross,[2] many refused to attend, alleging it to be contrary to law to be summoned thrice in a year;[3] while those that came showed greater inclination for negotiation than war. It was in compliance[4] with their counsel that the King and the Legate dispatched the Archbishop of Edessa, an Englishman by birth, a man wary and eloquent, to exhort the garrison to surrender; but his exhortations, while giving them timely notice of the King's approach, succeeded only in quickening their activity in the collection of forage. Far from dreading, they had long been desirous of a siege, and as if to provoke the King to yet speedier attack, they seized a Royal *cursor*, cut off his hand, and sent him thus mutilated, with ribald jests, to the Royal camp.[5] But, bitterly as Henry resented the affront, the siege was still delayed. From Northampton, whither the Royal army had marched from Oxford at the end of April, Edward was suddenly called away to check the bands of northern marauders, who had seized and pillaged Lincoln. The task proved an easy one, but it wasted two months, and an attempt of Edmund to invest the castle in the meantime, single-handed, was repulsed with loss.[6]

[1] *Lib. Ant. Leg.* p. 86. [2] Close Rolls, Brady, p. 656.
[3] Rishanger, p. 54. [4] *Ibid.*
[5] *Ibid.* Close Rolls, Brady, p. 656. [6] *Annals of Waverley* p. 222.

At last, on the 23rd of June [1] 1265, the Royal army encamped around Kenilworth, and the siege was formed. But, in spite of the King's oath not to stir thence till the castle was his own,[2] it was plain from the first that war was to be secondary to negotiation. Even after the rejection of the Archbishop's offers we find a safe-conduct granted on June 14th, while the army was still at Northampton, to the Disinherited who wished to treat with the Legate; and a few days only after the commencement of the siege the Legate, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and two of his suffragans, came with the purpose of arranging a peace.[3] Fifteen days' fruitless efforts ended, however, in an equally fruitless excommunication of the obstinate garrison, and the siege commenced. It was no light undertaking, and Henry had shown his sense of its magnitude by directing the citizens of Warwick to forward to the camp at Northampton . . . "Cementarios et omnes alios operarios de balliva tua, cum hachiis, pikasiis, et aliis utensilibus suis." [4] The castle was so strong as to have been deemed impregnable. No fortress of the realm could rival it in its equipment of war. Its supplies would have sufficed an ordinary garrison for years.[5] But the 1200 milites who had gathered there formed rather an army than a garrison, and made the operations not so much a siege as a war. Sir William de la

[1] Wikes, p. 76.
[2] *Annals of Waverley*, p. 222. [3] *Ibid.*
[4] Close Rolls, 50 Hen. III. Westminster, Nov. 20.
[5] Rishanger, p. 51.

Cowe and Sir John de la Warre were the wardens of the castle.[1] The names of some of its defenders are here given, as appended to Edward's letter from Chester, in August 1265. "Joh. de Muzegros, Ingerramus de Bayllol, Rad. de Lymes', Hugo de Culeworth, Nich. de Bosco, Hugo Wake, Joh. Fitzwalter, Will. de la Cene, Philippus de Boyville, Hugo de Traham, . . . de Caudewelle, milites; Walterus de Barkesvile, Nicholaus le Archer, Joh. de Bovy, Ric. de Havering', Joh. Page, Willielmus Camerarius; Walterus de London, clericus; Thomas de Wynton, clericus; Walterus de Glou, Galfridus de Crulefend, Joh. Luvel, Rob. Luvel, Thos. Luvel, Ricardo de Sancto Johanne, valletti." Besides the two chaplains given here, Robert of Gloucester tells us of Master Peris of Radnor, that was the "stalewardeste clerc on al Engelonde."[2]

All had hailed Henry of Hastings as their leader when, with Sir Nicole de Bois, he fled to Kenilworth, after the rout of Chesterfield. They saw without alarm the "tents and pavilions" rising in the meadows around, the lines drawn about them, and the erection of eleven petrariæ, which rained thenceforth night and day a shower of stones upon the castle.[3] Edward had made vigorous efforts to match its renowned armament. In the Close Rolls for the year we find mandates directed to the wardens of the city of London, John Walround and John de Luids,

[1] Rob. Gloc. p. 565. [2] *Ibid.*
[3] Rishanger, p. 57.

bidding them supply Conrad the balistarius with £12, "ad nervos et cordas emendos et ad balistas faciendas"; and on 23rd October an order to the constable of the castle to forward to Kenilworth quarrells and fourteen balistæ without delay. But throughout the Royal engineers found themselves overmatched. A wooden tower of wondrous height and breadth, constructed by Edward at enormous cost, from whose floors more than 200 balistarii poured arrows and other missiles on the garrison, fell before the stones hurled perseveringly against it by a mangonel from within.[1] A machine, called the bear, which sheltered a number of archers, was levelled by one of the petrariæ of the castle. Barges were brought at much expense from Cheshire, and an attempt was made to assail the walls from the water, but the attempt failed. Throughout the siege, in fact, the besiegers were thrown practically on the defensive.[2] The gates of the castle stood defiantly open from morning till night, and the garrison made daily sallies of horse and foot, threatening the very herds which, gathered for the consumption of the Royal army, browsed in the meadows beneath. The besiegers, on the other hand, ventured on no general attack, but confined themselves to repulsing these desperate sallies. On one day only were they interrupted by an incident characteristic of the time. From the open gate descended a bier, surrounded with tapers, bearing the corpse of a brave knight of

[1] Rishanger, p. 56. [2] *Ibid.* pp. 55, 56.

gentle blood, who had fallen wounded into the hands of the Disinherited, and was now borne forth for burial in accordance with his dying wish. The courtesy of the castellans may have aided the efforts of the peace party in the Royal camp. Rejected as their first offer had been, the Legate and the King of the Romans had not ceased their attempts at mediation, and their spirit was shared by the Parliament that met before Kenilworth on St. Bartholomew's Day, 24th August 1266, and which a sense of the importance of the crisis caused to be numerously attended.[1] Their first act showed their resolve that this strife should cease. The King's most pressing need was for money. The great expense of the siege had forced him to leave his Queen penniless at Windsor.[2] The treasury he had brought with him was drained. His first demand, therefore, after a solemn confirmation of the charter, was for a tenth from the clergy for three years. The whole Parliament united in their reply. They would first establish peace, if peace were possible, and then answer the King on this matter. The Legate added his approval, and the King at once gave way. On the 26th of August (according to the original record in Norman-French on the Patent Roll, 50 Hen. III. *in dorso*) "it was agreed and granted by common assent, and by the common counsel of the bishops, abbots, priors, earls, barons, and all others," that six commissioners

[1] "Magnum Parliamentum." *Annals of Waverley*, p. 222.
[2] Close Rolls, 50 Hen. III.

should be chosen, who in turn should elect other six, to provide for the state of the kingdom and of the Disinherited. The words of the record sufficiently indicate the national character of the act; the additional words of the *Annals of Waverley*, perhaps, only indicate the general impression which it conveyed. In that account, it is stated that the commissioners, bishops or barons, were specially to be men English-born and lovers of their country.[1]

The character of the commissioners chosen corresponded with the temper of the Parliament. All were of the party which, as distinct both from the ultra-Royalists and from the national cause, we may call "Constitutional Royalists." The Bishops of Exeter, Worcester, Bath and Wells, Robert Walround, Roger de Someri, and Alan de la Zouche formed the first six, and these associated with themselves the Bishop of St. Davids, the Earls of Gloucester and Hereford, John Balliol, Philip Basset, and Warin de Bassingbourne. With the exception of Earl Gilbert all had been staunch supporters of the Crown. De Bohun, Basset, De Someri, and De la Zouche had been captured at Lewes. Bassingbourne had headed the Royalist charge at Evesham. But the majority of them were well known as inclined to a policy of moderation. The peaceful inclinations of the Court were notorious, and two of the bishops (Walter Giffard and Nicholas Ely) were, the one a Royal chancellor, the other an ex-chancellor. Walround, a

[1] "Indigenas et terram diligentes." *Ann. of Waverley*, p. 223.

man of great diplomatic experience, had in 1262 been joined on a like commission with Philip Basset and Walter de Merton to effect a compromise with the barons. Basset himself, one of the bravest of the King's supporters, was pledged to moderation by the fortunes of his house. His son-in-law, Hugh Despenser, and his cousin, Ralph Basset, had fallen by Earl Simon's side at Evesham; his daughter, Despenser's wife, had taken shelter with him after that fatal overthrow. The widow of Ralph Basset, again, was the daughter of Roger de Someri, and the father's loyalty alone saved her manors from confiscation. Bassingbourne had been enriched by the forfeitures of the barons, but his son had served in their ranks, and was still unpardoned. Of the two earls, De Bohun, though ever on the King's side, was a staunch supporter of English liberties, and his son had been one of the rebel leaders at Lewes and a captive at Evesham. His colleague needs no comment—he was Earl Gilbert of Clare.

The Twelve[1] were the first to make solemn oath, "de utilibus ordinandis"; and the King, the clergy, and the people in succession swore to the observance of their Ban. The Legate and Henry of Almaine were added as umpires in case of any division of opinion,[2] and at the close of August their deliberations began. It is worth while to notice that on the first head submitted to them, the question *De Statu Regni*, whose importance we shall see presently, the

[1] Westminster, p. 344. [2] Rishanger, p. 57.

Twelve were perfectly in accord. On the second, of the state of the Disinherited, unanimity was impossible. Should any or none be excluded from the redemption of their lands—"fiat exhæredatio aut redemptio"—was the question that met them at the outset. Some contended that there might be cases of total confiscation, others that only a third of the lands should here and there be restored, others advised the restitution of a half. The matter was at last referred to the umpires, and it is to Henry and Ottobuoni that the final decision was owing, and liberty of redemption on one term or another left open to all.[1]

The decision was the signal for a storm of opposition. Liberty of redemption—in other words the rescinding of the confiscation—was the death-blow of the ultra-Royalists. Mortimer and his fellow-Marchers had the credit, they pushed to the utmost the claim of having "brought the King back." "Quasi reges dicebantur, regale dominium sibi protectum usurpando eo quod Regem tanquam a carcere liberassent."[2] Theirs had been the profit of the pillage of the clergy, and of the confiscation of the Disinherited. Every motive of hatred and greed urged them to resist this proposal to disgorge their spoil. They broke out in mad violence, threatening the life of the Legate himself. But their power was over, the national

[1] The questions and decisions of the umpires are appended to the Dictum, and give us the inner history of the consultations of the Twelve.

[2] Rishanger, p. 48.

resolve was not to be shaken by the threats of a faction, and the utter rout of Mortimer by Llewellyn at Brecknock,[1] the only defeat that had chequered the course of the Royalist success, in the spring, had damaged their leader's influence. Backed by Edward and Earl Gilbert the Legate met their threats boldly. He had received commission, he said, to excommuni cate all disturbers of the peace, and the excommunication which they had solicited against De Montfort he would, if need were, fulminate against them.[2] Then they turned against Earl Gilbert of Gloucester. On him was now to fall the Nemesis of the one black deed that stains his life. The departure of the sons of De Montfort had left him free to break from his unnatural union with the Marchers, to stand forth again as the champion of English right and English justice. He earnestly supported the decision of the arbitrators, and the restoration of their lands to the Disinherited. By grant, or yet oftener by lawless seizure, the bulk of the spoils were in the hands of the fierce marauders with whom he had sworn against the Earl's life, and now there were dark rumours of a league against his own.[3] The struggle at last ended in secession; both parties quitted the Royal camp, Mortimer ostensibly to protect his lands against the Disinherited, De Clare with the avowed design of crushing, by the decisive stroke which he afterwards executed, the last relics of the influence of the Marchers.

[1] *Ann. of Waverley*, p. 222.
[2] Rishanger, p. 57. [3] *Ibid.* p. 59.

The strife did not interrupt the labours of the Twelve, while the Bishop of Ely brought tidings to the camp which quickened the anxiety of all for some speedy pacification.[1] The whole face of the country, drained of its defenders by the concentration of the Royal forces round Kenilworth, was scoured by the bands of the Disinherited, in spite of Royal directions that castles and towns should be carefully guarded, and all depredators be at once pursued with the Hue and Cry.[2] By one of these bands the Isle of Ely, though jealously guarded by the bishop, was seized about Michaelmas, and the natural fortress at once filled with Disinherited.[3] Prince Edward was detached against this new danger, but the tide of popular courage was still rising. The King's brief, dispatched to all the sheriffs of England, directing the observance of the Great Charter throughout the realm, had no sooner been read at Guildhall on the Eve of St. Michael, than the citizens claimed the free election of their own mayor and sheriffs which was provided in it. Their envoys appeared now in the camp, and returned successful. William Fitz-Richard, the Royal nominee, was removed, and the city made its own election of bailiffs.[4] Amid all this the commissioners proceeded in their settlement of the details of redemption, continually referring their disputes to the Legate and Lord Henry, who as invariably decided in a sense favourable to the Disinherited. On

[1] Rishanger, p. 58.
[2] Close Roll, 50 Hen. III. Westm. March 15.
[3] Wikes, p. 77.
[4] *Lib. Ant. Leg.* pp. 86-88.

the 7th of October, though still unproclaimed, the award must have been really completed, for on that day the King[1] granted power to Philip Marmion, William de la Zouche, and William de St. Omer, "to treat for peace with those who hold out against us, and to grant them safe-conduct to the Royal camp." But the formal announcement was reserved for the Parliament now summoned to meet at Northampton at the close of the month. The Legate, desirous of increasing the sanction to be given by it to the Dictum of the Twelve, had directed all archdeacons to forward lists of the abbots and priors within their provinces, and had threatened with excommunication all spiritual persons who neglected to attend.[2]

In the presence of the two Kings, the Legate, and this great assembly, the Twelve, on the 30th of September, the Wednesday before All Saints' Day, pronounced their award. Beside five copies of minor importance, the oldest and most valuable text of the Dictum is that preserved in the Cott. MS. Claudius D. ii. f. 119 b, a copy beautifully written and in complete preservation, and from which the text given in the Statutes of the Realm has been taken. It bears in the Chronicles and in the heading of the MS. the same title of the "Dictum" of Kenilworth; though sometimes in the course of the document styled "ordinacio nostra"; the words have commonly

[1] Pat. Roll, 50 Hen. III.
[2] Rishanger, p. 67.

been rendered the "Award" of Kenilworth; it is, perhaps, too late to suggest a change, but I have ventured to style it the "Ban of Kenilworth," partly as the rendering given by the only contemporary, Robert of Gloucester, who designates the Dictum by an English term, partly as restoring to the word the truer sense, which, save in the phrase "giving out the bans," it has almost wholly lost.

The Dictum is so long, so encumbered with details, and so easily accessible in the Statutes of the Realm, that I need not give more than a brief abstract of most of its later provisions. Its earlier are more important. It is easy, by passing them over, to regard the Ban as the mere capitulation of a beaten party, though even then, our common historians, who adopt this interpretation, forget to explain why it is claimed as a victory by the chroniclers, such as the annalist of Waverley and Rishanger. But, in truth, the "Award concerning the State of the Realm," which they pass over, is the most important portion of the whole, while the details of the redemption are but temporary arrangements, passing away with the emergency which called them forth.

The Ban opens with words too solemn to be viewed as merely formal. "In the name of the Holy Trinity, to the honour of God, the Saints, and the Catholic Church; for the honour, prosperity, and peace of the King, the whole realm, and Church of England, we, associated to make provision for the

State of the Realm, and of the Disinherited, having from the King and others, barons, councillors of the realm, and nobles of England, full power, according to the form written in public letters sealed with the seals of the aforesaid King and others, make under God's favours those provisions which, according to law and right, we deem to be in accord with God's good pleasure and the peace of the realm, accepting no man's person in this matter, but having God alone before our eyes, and acting therefore as in the sight of God." After this solemn exordium, the Twelve proceed to the first great question laid before them, *De Statu Regni.* Their primary care is to restore the machinery of government to its full efficiency; to render to the King all former rights and prerogatives; to declare all amenable to his courts; to annul all acts of his while in captivity. But from this they pass to a series of demands strangely neglected by historians, but constituting a solemn assertion of English liberty. First, they claim a real administration of justice. "We beseech the King, and respectfully press on his piety, that he appoint such men to administer justice as, seeking not their own but what is of God and justice, may duly settle his subjects' business according to the laws and customs of the realm, and so render the throne of the King's majesty strengthened by justice." Thence they pass to like petition and request that "the King fully keep and observe those ecclesiastical liberties, charters of liberties and of forests, which he

is expressly and by his own oath bound to preserve and keep." "Let the King," they add, "establish on a lasting foundation those concessions which he has hitherto made of his own will and not under compulsion, and those needful ordinances which have been devised by his subjects and by his own good pleasure." In the same way they demand the suppression of the abuse of purveyance, the restoration of the Church to its former condition, and the immediate restitution of its charters and privileges to the City of London.

In the opening of their second division, *De Statu Exhæredatorum*, they lay down the broad principle that in this alone among civil wars confiscation was to be the fate of none. "Non fiat exhæredatio sed redemptio." For this purpose the commissioners divide the Disinherited into classes, according to the ransom due from each. The garrison of Northampton, the plunderers of Winchester, those who had fought against the King at Lewes, Evesham, and Chesterfield, who had sent their aids voluntarily against him, or committed ravage, murder, and arson on their neighbours, might redeem their lands on payment of five years' rental. Fines, gradually decreasing to half a year's rental, were assigned to lesser offenders, and elaborate directions given for the due execution of the redemption, on which it is needless to dwell. The difficult question of the De Montforts was evaded; Henry III. had referred it in the spring to the decision of the King of France,

and the Court seems to have contemplated their return after all was settled and peaceful. The murder of the King of Almaine's son Henry by Simon and Guy de Montfort, in revenge of their father's death, alone prevented this by turning into fierce hatred the neutral dispositions of the Court. "Disposuit Deus," wrote some bitter Royalist exultingly under the picture of the murder on the wall of the church at Viterbo, "Disposuit Deus ut per eos vir tantus obiret, ne, revocatis his, gens Anglica tota periret."[1] But the commissioners petitioned King and Pope alike against the popular canonisation of Earl Simon and "the vain and silly miracles" reported to be wrought at his tomb. Henry was requested to satisfy as far as possible the disappointed grantees, lest their resentment should furnish occasion for fresh war; immediate restitution was promised to those innocent persons who had been disinherited on false charges, and punishment was denounced against their accusers. Finally, a complete indemnity for all wrongs done or endured throughout the troubles, and the full benefits of the Ban, were assured to those who availed themselves of its terms within forty days after their publication, and the King was requested to appoint twelve commissioners to carry out equitably its details.

The annalist of Waverley's summary of it, "facta pronunciatione adjudicati sunt terris suis omnes exhæredati,"[2] marks the popular appreciation of the

[1] Westminster, p. 350. [2] *Ann. of Waverley*, p. 223.

Ban as a victory for the national cause. Those only who had won the victory failed to recognise its value. With the exception of Henry of Hastings and the mutilator of the King's *cursor*, on whom a fine of seven years was imposed, the defenders of Kenilworth fell within the general terms of the Dictum, and on its confirmation by King and baronage it was at once offered them. The exemption of their leader may have angered the garrison, or the rising at Ely roused fresh hope; that offer was at any rate refused. Then the Legate, in his red cope among a ring of bishops, pronounced against them the sentence of excommunication. They met it with defiance and mockery; innumerable pennons and standards fluttered out along the walls,[1] whence a puppet Legate, in cope of white, pronounced a jesting excommunication on Ottobuoni and the Royalists.[2] In spite, however, of defiance and mockery, the inevitable end drew near. Louis of France, since the rejection of his award by the barons, had been the steady friend of the Crown. He had suffered the Count of S. Pol to conduct auxiliaries to the King, but his opposition had foiled[3] the efforts of

[1] Rishanger, p. 58.

[2] Rob. Gloucester, p. 566. It was the device of

> Master Philip Porpeis that was a quaint man,
> Clerk and hardy of deeds, and their chirurgeon.
> They made a white Legate in his cope of white
> As the other red, as him in despite,
> And he stood as a Legate upon the castle wall,
> And cursed King and Legate and their men all.

[3] Rishanger, p. 55.

the sons of De Montfort to raise a similar force, and Simon and Guy had abandoned their enterprise and were following their cousin Philip de Montfort to the Italian campaign. Thinned as the Royal army had been by the departure of Prince Edward, Earl Gilbert, and Mortimer, it still clung to the siege, and summoned carpenters for the erection of huts for winter quarters. Want and fever disabled the once enterprising garrison from taking advantage of their weakness. Provisions were failing; there was no forage for the horses; the want of water was ill-compensated by abundance of wine; there was no wood for fires, and the walls were so shattered by the constant attacks that the sufferings of the besieged from cold became intolerable. In the beginning of November they were forced to agree to a surrender if no aid came within forty days, and in the suspension of arms which followed they sent letters to Simon. No relief came or was expected, and in the middle of December the garrison marched out. They had to the last hidden their state from the besiegers, but there were now only two days' rations in the place, and their worn and emaciated frames, the pale and discoloured faces of the Disinherited, told the tale of sufferings gallantly borne. The stench within the castle which they left was so intolerable as nearly to suffocate the Royalists who entered it.[1]

This is no time to tell the story, which never has

[1] Wikes, pp. 77, 78.

been told, of the events which followed the surrender of Kenilworth. It is enough to say that Ely accepted the Dictum, that Earl Gilbert's masterly seizure of London procured its definite acceptance as public law.

I cannot close this memoir without suggesting two thoughts which seem to spring from the history of this memorable year. It is perhaps the greatest instance in our annals of that resolve to struggle on when all seemed lost, to which so much of our freedom is owing. It is fortunate that in the battle of liberty, as in the battle of Waterloo, Englishmen never knew when they were beaten. Other peoples have wrested liberty from weak princes on the crash of thrones, but England alone has won hers in the hour of royal triumph, or from kings such as Edward the First. And then, with this Ban begins what has been a national characteristic ever since. We do not write *Væ Victis* as the motto of our revolutions, nor can party struggles cause us to forget our truer brotherhood as Englishmen. It is something that from the Dictum of Kenilworth we can look proudly along to the self-restraint of the Restoration, to the clemency of 1688, to the forbearance and mutual respect which restrain the bitterness of the political strifes of to-day.

PIERRE DE LANGTOFT[1]

(1869)

ALL that is known of Peter of Langtoft may be summed up in a very few words. It is probable that the writer of this metrical chronicle was a Canon of Bridlington in Yorkshire, and his work itself fixes his date in the opening of the reign of Edward II. The Chronicle consists of an abridgment of Geoffry of Monmouth's History of the Britons, a condensed account of our earlier kings to the death of Henry III., and a fuller detail of the reign of his greater successor, Edward I. As a literary effort it represents the tradition by which the older rhymers of the school of Benoit and Wace passed into the picturesque chroniclers of the school of Froissart. Side by side with the graver annals of the monastic Scriptorium went on these chivalrous accommodations of history to the tastes of knight and baron, the long rhyme which took its turn with the ballad of the minnesinger or the lay of the trouveur. It is ridiculous to regard

[1] *The Chronicle of Pierre de Langtoft in French Verse, to the Death of King Edward I.* Edited by Thomas Wright, Esq., M.A. Rolls Series. London: Longmans. 1868.

such works as directly historic—to rely on Wace for the history of the Conquest or on Froissart for the story of the wars with France. But as constituting in themselves a part of the history of their time, they are invaluable. They reflect for us vividly and picturesquely the whole temper of what were in fact the ruling classes of their day; they let us look on events as they occur through the spectacles of the men who wrought them; and the very contrast between their conception of the time and our own is in itself the first and most prominent fact which we have to grasp before undertaking any historic investigation at all. The contrast, too, etches itself out for us in the most graceful and amusing way. To read a chronicle like Langtoft's, for instance, is really to stand by the dais and to catch all the chatting and jesting of the baronial hall. The English Justinian, as people like pompously to call him in our day, is *od de lunge jambes*, mere "long-shanks" to the babblers of his own. There is all the conversational undercurrent of humour which gives such a piquancy to the pages of Froissart: "He has lost his head," is the laughing comment on the fall of the last Prince of Wales; "he has no need of a hat." The chronicler is essentially a story-teller, and his story falls naturally into Herodotean form; but the drama is never left to itself, the story-teller is always present in his own quaint personality, breaking its current with gay little comments, with flicker of hate or contempt, of love and pity, and now and

then, as he remembers his priesthood, with decorous little sermons or moral episodes on the virtues of King Arthur and the gentleness of the Table Round. All the grace, the high sentiment, the real ruffianly selfishness and hardness of heart which we sum up in the word "chivalry" find themselves reflected in the pleasant babbling verse. The trader, the peasant, the people at large, are but the "rout of rascayle." Langtoft's jests on the massacre of the burghers of Berwick equal the calm indifference of Froissart to the yet more atrocious massacre of Limoges. England, in fact—mere peaceful, industrious England—occupies very little of the chronicler's space. Peace is a vulgar prosaic thing to this clerk of knighthood, who sees nothing in the world but war and tourneys and revolts. To us nothing seems more uninteresting than the Gascon wars of King Edward. But Langtoft's heart is in Gascony, in the raids and ravages of the fair realm of France. The struggles of Scotch and Welsh for freedom which fascinate the modern reader, are to him mere plebeian interruptions in the great game of politics, unknightly nuisances turning the world of chivalry upside down.

> May Wales be accursed of God and S. Simon
> For it has always been full of treason ;
> May Scotland be cursed by the mother of God,
> And may Wales be sunk deep to the devil—

are curses easily intelligible when the poet explains that the revolt of the one caused the loss of Toulouse, and the defection of the other prevented the recovery

of Aquitaine. Patriotism, freedom, devotion to one's country against a foreign king, are strange notions to this gay rhymer. While we shudder at the cruelties of Edward, Langtoft sings pleasantly of the Scotch barons:—

> May our King Edward be struck with madness
> If he does not take them and hold them so close in cage
> That nothing remains to them after his taxing
> Save their shoes and their bare buttocks.

We can hardly wonder that in Yorkshire halls, Wallace was a "mestre de larrouns" and Bruce "le fol," "le fol rey Robyn"; or that the baronial theory of the Scotch war was the simple one that if King Edward

> Of the land of Scotland had shared and given
> To his English barons, by just quantities,
> The land over there would have been in his power,
> And his men heritors of it for ever.

The greed of these chivalrous barons rings through every page. Historians who accept the "constitutional" theory of the reign of Edward are fond of telling of the two great Earls whose refusal to accompany the King over sea brought about the final ratification of the great Charter. It is amusing to compare with all this fine writing the baronial impression of the matter:—

> Listen to the fault where all the sin lay—
> In ancient histories we find written
> What kings and what kingdoms Arthur conquered,
> And how he shared largely his gain.

> There was not a king under him who contradicted him,
> Earl, Duke, or Baron who ever failed him
> In war or battle, but each followed him.
> The King, Sir Edward, has given too little ;
> Whereby, at his departure, when he put to sea
> Against the King of France, the affront was shown him
> That not one of the Earls undertook the expedition.

Simple as these extracts are, they enable us to understand the reign of Edward better than a thousand "Constitutional Histories." A quiet bonfire, in fact, of "Constitutional Histories" is the first requisite for any adequate representation of the England of the Edwards. So long as a word like "Parliament" is used, in defiance of obvious facts, as a constant quantity, as an institution popular and democratic in the fifteenth century, because it is (or is not) popular and democratic in the nineteenth, the whole matter must remain a riddle. So long as men regard the great Charter as directly a victory of "English liberty" and not (in its direct effects) as the mere substitution of an oligarchy of blood and wealth for the rule of the Crown, we must be prepared to hear the age of Edward I. greeted as the opening of all that is really popular in our annals. It was, in fact, the lowest deep into which the popular elements of our Constitution were ever plunged. The famous phrase in which Hume paints "the last of the great barons that overawed the Crown" is the picture of an age rather than of a man—the age that stretches from the accession of Edward I. to the fall of the House of Lancaster. After Evesham a triple

oligarchy overawes at once Crown and people—the oligarchy of the Church, the Baronage, the Burgher. Under the three Edwards they advance more and more in power, stripping the Crown, humbling the people, knit together in the one peculiarly English bond, not of blood or race, but of property. The protest of the Lollard, at once democratic, social, religious, is a triple protest against dogma, property, and aristocracy; and the revolt of the people is caught at by the Crown. The struggle occupies the close of the third Edward's reign, the whole of Richard's; the fall of the last is the victory of the oligarchy, knit together into forgetfulness of their own intestine divisions by the common peril. The sovereigns of the House of Lancaster are mere "doges" of the priesthood, the nobles, the burgher class; burning their heretics, guarding their guilds, waging their wars. The Baronage falls, broken by its own inherent rottenness, in the Wars of the Roses; the Church falls before the Revival of Letters; it is only the Reformation that lifts up the people from beneath the feet of the *bourgeoisie*.

Of the three great bodies in whose hands the realm thus rested for more than two centuries, the first, in the days of Langtoft, was unquestionably the Baronage. The day was theirs. They had crushed the Crown in the Barons' war, they had set aside all hope of deeper change by their desertion and murder of De Montfort at Evesham. From that hour England was ruled by a purely aristocratic

rule. The Government was really in the hands of the "Continual Council," in other words, of the great barons and baronial prelates acting as officers of State and forming a permanent committee of administration, which was backed up when needful by the "Great Council," the *levée en masse* of the noblesse. The quiet government of the country by this Council during the two years of royal absence before the coronation of Edward shows where power really lay. In the brief they publish, the crown devolves on the King "by the will of the Peers." The boasted legislation of Edward is but the legal recognition and consecration of this oligarchical advance. By forbidding alienation and transfer, the Second Statute of Westminster in effect transfers the real ownership of land from the tenant to the lord; while by this, as well as the Statute of Merton, the most oppressive of all "rights of property," the right of enclosure, is for the first time asserted against their tenants. But it is not necessary to seek signs of their real supremacy in the dusty details of legislation. The famous defiance of the two Earls, their "By God, Sir King, we will neither go nor hang," proved to Edward himself, even at his highest, who was the real ruler of the realm. The King "caves in," as the Yankees say, and flings himself with tears on the pity of his masters, while a proclamation of the Barons cancels the royal tax. Edward's struggles only confirm the victory of the Lords. The bitterness and cruelty of his old age are the writhings of a

beaten, shackled man. He knows their power, warns his son of it, bids him not recall Gaveston without the sanction of their Parliament, and dies. He had begun by copying French policy, by legal attacks on his noblesse, writs of *quo warranto* and the like. But the Baronage soon crushed the lawyers. The general upset of the Judicial Bench in 1290 was forced on by the Parliament. Edward had copied the French king a second time in his feudal claims over Scotland. But the Barons take the Scotch war out of his hands, force him into a pledge to divide conquered Scotland among them, and "will not permit the King, even if he wishes it" (so they wrote to Pope Boniface), "to give up his claim." They killed the lawyers, but the lawyers hit them a hard blow in dying. They made justice crueller, more impartial. The execution of David, a noble as well as a rebel, marks a new judicial era. The Scotch hangings and quarterings at the close of Edward's life really strike at the root of aristocratic privilege—an earl disembowelled was a new and hopeful thing in England. They killed Wallace, but he hit them a yet harder blow. His real significance is as a protest against the aristocratic system, a protest whose sting lay in the fact that with a "rout of rascayle" he had beaten them in their own chosen game of war. It is his "low rank" that they reproach him with at the scaffold. It is they, not Edward, who drag him there. Able as he is, the King plays little real part in the events of his reign. He is busy, stirring, everywhere, and yet

practically whirled along like a straw upon the stream. It is only with half a heart, indeed, that he struggles against it. There is much in his own tastes and temper that flings him into the general current of his age. At bottom he is thoroughly the first baron of his realm. His conceptions are feudal rather than kingly, his pleasure is the tournament, his serious thoughts run on the formalities of homage and vassalage. There are gleams of a noble nature in him as in his age; and, as in his age, all is sullied by a want of sympathy with man. The massacre of Berwick, as we have said, is an anticipation of the massacre of Limoges. It is the pretentious, glittering falsehood, the foul cruelty of chivalry, which dawns in the vow of the Swan as the old man passes away.

THE ANNALS OF OSNEY AND WYKES[1]

(1869)

MASSED together into the four convenient volumes of which this is the last, the Monastic Annals which we owe to the care and learning of Mr. Luard are not merely important in themselves, but of special interest as showing the particular form which historical literature took in the thirteenth century. With the close of that century almost every trace of it dies away. "There are very few monasteries," says Mr. Luard, "which continued their annals either at all, or with anything like the same spirit and diligence, after the reign of Edward the First." The chronicle dies out, that is, just as the folk-mote dies out, or as the patriotic friar of Earl Simon's day dies into the canting mendicant of the days of Wycliffe. The reason for such a suspension of what in the bulk of these houses formed the one lingering effort after intellectual life, must be sought in causes deeper than

[1] *Annales Monastici*, Vol. IV. Edited by H. R. Luard, M.A., under the direction of the Master of the Rolls. London: Longmans and Co. 1869.

those which the preface suggests—the troubles of the Second Edward or the Black Death of the Third. The Black Death, and the communistic movement which followed it, did in fact more than anything else to break up the torpor that had settled on the moral and intellectual life of the land. It was the oligarchic selfishness that showed itself in the labour laws of the noble, in the guild laws of the burgher, in the degradation of the Church into a colossal landlord, which showed itself on a smaller scale in this break in the chain of historic tradition that linked the religious houses to a nobler past. In contrast to the absolute dearth of historic material which follows them, these annals show creditably enough. It is only when we compare them with the age that went before that we feel their deficiencies. The larger school of Malmesbury and of Newburgh had died out with the earlier Angevins. The successors of Henry II. showed little of that personal interest in historical studies to which we owe the compilation of Hoveden and the gossip of Gerald of Wales. But there were larger causes than the mere cessation of royal favour at work. The influence of classical literature, so obvious in the larger conception of Malmesbury, was rudely swept away by the religious impulse embodied in the friars. The intellectual revival of the age of Bernard and John of Salisbury poured its energies, in the century that followed them, into scholastic and political rather than into historical channels. History, as we have said, shrinks

back into the monastic chronicle, but our disappointment ought not to blind us to the real merits of the more limited form which it thus assumed. The writers of the annals which Mr. Luard has given us are of course utterly without philosophical insight or power of grouping facts on any definite principle, or of depicting subtly mingled characters such as those of Earl Simon. They have no such command as Hoveden had over State documents; as a rule they have only second-hand access to the facts they relate, and they muddle up in the most provoking way the narrative of great political events with the paltry details of their own squabbles with bishop and squire. But, on the other hand, they are thoroughly truthful and honest in what they do tell—honest even in their very prejudices—and in their simple way they give us what is sometimes a very touching insight into the personal feelings of the time.

We can hardly illustrate this better than by a reference to the first of the annalists preserved for us in the present volume. The monk to whom we owe the Chronicle of Osney is a thoroughly good patriot, and an ardent supporter of Earl Simon. He writes after the fortune of war has gone against the Earl, when it is treason to rejoice in his victories, when his name is banned, when Edward, his victor, is the hero of the hour. There is something wonderfully pathetic in the unswerving courage with which this one man sits down to tell the story of it all, with a heart still loyal, in a quiet way, to the good cause.

So far as silence may serve, he will make what concession he can—"quia propter temporum malitiam non est tutum omnia vera loqui, ideo ad praesens tacemus nomina magnatum qui fugerant et qui capti fuerant in bello praedicto"—the battle of Lewes. So, too, as he will not join in the chorus of praise over the conqueror of De Montfort, he will omit all mention of his name till Evesham is over, and the great Earl gone. But, gone though he be, to him he will still be true. His burial shall be told like the burial of his Lord. One man, at any rate, will confess that, if he fell, he fell for the honour of God and for the laws of the land.

Post proelium ita commissum quidam ex amicis comitis defuncti lamentantes et dolentes, cum magis esset gaudendum quam dolendum, si vis doloris rationem admitteret, venerunt in agrum, et reliquum corporis quod sub divo derelictum fuerat super scalam veterem et debilem collocaverunt, et vili collobio et dilacerato cooperuerunt, et ad ecclesiam conventualem Eveshamiae deportaverunt, et in linteamine mundo involventes, in monumento novo deposuerunt in quo nondum quisquis positus fuerat. . . . Sed est Deus clementissimus omnium conditor fidelium et redemptor, qui adhuc revelabit suorum merita servorum, qui pro sui nominis honore et patriis legibus sanguinem suum fuderunt, et gladiis multorum occubuerunt, ad laudem et gloriam nominis sui sempiternam.

Of course we are not citing this passage as if it stood at all alone; the great outpouring of devotion to the Earl after death is common to the annalist with nearly all the chroniclers of his day, and proves, amongst other things, how far liberty was from having fallen at Evesham. But it is odd that the

almost single contemporary exception should be found in the man who seems all but immediately afterwards to have taken his annals as the base for a work of his own. We must refer our readers to Mr. Luard for a very clear account of the relation of the one writer to the other; for our present purpose it is sufficient to observe that Wykes is as strong a royalist as his predecessor is a patriot, and that he did his work of revision in a yet more complete way than Matthew Paris in his revision of Wendover. The two accounts, in fact, of the period from 1258 to 1278, the years of the Barons' war, are wholly distinct, and utterly opposite in tone.

The real interest of Wykes lies in his being the first to originate that eulogy of Edward I. which in our own day has mounted in certain quarters almost to adoration. We are not going to protest against it, or to discuss the general question of Edward's claim to the honours which have been assigned to him, but in running over the pages of Wykes it is impossible not to notice how extremely difficult the facts of his earlier career, even as told by an admirer, are to reconcile with the theory not merely of his goodness, but even of his common honesty. It is difficult now, as men found it difficult then, to follow Edward's course in the civil war. His attitude towards the provisions of Oxford was unintelligible to Henry himself. At one moment, in his persevering struggle to get free from them, the King clearly believed that his chief danger lay in his son. In

1259 the Court whispers ran that Edward was plotting his father's deposition, says Wykes:—

Rex Angliae circa Pascha, pace inter ipsum et regem Francorum diutius pertractata nec tamen ut ex post facto patebit plenissime solidata, proponens redire in Angliam, simul cum regina venit apud Sanctum Audomarum, ibique suggestum est ei quod dominus Edwardus primogenitus suus de consilio baronum et procerum Angliae, de quibus complures sibi confoederaverat, ambitione regnandi ad patris sui depositionem coeperat aspirare, ita duntaxat ut si veniret in Angliam ipsum faceret captivari, et quamdiu viveret in custodia detineri, sibique patre adhuc superstite imponeret regni diadema, quod falsissimum fuit. Timuit tamen rex, et distulit in Angliam remeare.

In so ardent an adherent of Edward's, Wykes's "*falsissimum*" must go for what it is worth. Whether Edward really entertained designs of such a nature or not, he clearly was acting not in the nation's interest but simply in his own. He holds aloof from the imbecile perfidy of his father, but he holds just as much aloof from Earl Simon and the patriots. His one single aim seems to be to save his own interests out of the fire. So long as utter inaction is possible he is inactive. He interferes with no protest or remonstrance against Henry's mad career of provocation, while on the whole he seems to incline to the side of the Barons. When, however, the patience of the nation is fairly worn out by the King's duplicity, and the flight of his queen and ministers leaves Henry standing alone before the angry baronage, in 1263, Edward suddenly appears in a new character on the scene. It is amusing to note the *naïveté* with

which his monastic admirer records the purely selfish motives which urged him to this sudden activity. The opportunity, it must be remembered, was one which never recurred. The Parliament of 1263 was the only time in De Montfort's history when he had a real chance of forcing Henry into his true position as a legal king. It is the express statement of Edward's eulogist that the loss of this opportunity was owing simply to Edward's selfish fears lest his father's concessions should tell against himself :—

In ipso tunc parliamento, quod expleta tanta solemnitate rex tenuit cum magnatibus, pertractare curabat ut honestis conditionibus utrobique concessis, per pacem et concordiam regni nobilibus indissolubili foedere necteretur. Dominus Edwardus videns quod comes complicium suorum veritate subnixus ad amplectendam pacem inflexibilis permaneret, caute prospiciens et praecavens in futurum ne quod patri suo factum fuerat eo mortuo traheretur in consequentiam, callidis allectionibus adjunxit sibi Johannem Basset et omnes Marchienses, comitem Marescallum, et quamplures de nobilibus regni, convocans eos in adjutorium suum, ut impetus comitis quos contra ipsum moliebatur sua virtute reprimerent vel saltem fraenarent audaciam.

The blow was unscrupulous enough, but, like most of his blows, it took full and instant effect. The Parliament broke up, and the King flung himself into Edward's arms, and rode off to summon Dover to admit him, as Charles in a like critical moment summoned Hull, and like him to summon it in vain. Then Earl Simon threw himself into London, and the war was begun. Edward had now at any rate definitely taken his part; from this moment he is,

in fact, the soul of the Royalist resistance. When the absurd arbitration of Lewis had broken down, he appeared by his father's side at the muster at Oxford; it was his boldness which planned the dash on Northampton and the first capture of the younger Simon. The merciless sack of the town gives the first indication of that steady hatred which Edward was thenceforth to display to the democratic communities in whom Earl Simon's prescience saw the future of the realm. At Lewes he showed it again. He was at the head of the flower of the royal knighthood, and even his consummate generalship was forgotten in the mad hatred with which he dashed it against the democratic Londoners. He was avenging, say modern eulogists, his mother's wrongs. His eulogist of the thirteenth century put, in the first place, his vengeance for his own :—

> Dominus Edwardus, cui flos totius exercitus intendebat, relicto patre et patruo, ad turmas Londinensium quos nimirum praecipuis odiis insectabat, se cum tota favente sibi militia transferebat, ut non tantum suas, sed et patris et matris injurias vindicaret.

The defeat left Edward a prisoner in Earl Simon's hands, and he remained without political importance till his escape revealed the conspiracy which had been formed under the Earl of Gloucester. But, linked as they now were by a common hostility to De Montfort, there was no real unity in the aims of Edward and Earl Gilbert. What roused the alarm and the revolt of the baronage was the attitude of Earl Simon

—an attitude hardly perhaps more intelligible to himself than to them, the result not so much of distinct purpose on his part as of his vivid sympathy with the nobler impulses of his time. In the ally, if not the creator, of communal democracy, in the religious zealot around whom gathered the equally democratic enthusiasm of the friars, the baronage dimly felt a danger greater than any danger from the Crown. But, while striking blindly at the new foe, Gloucester and his confederates were by no means inclined to give up their struggle with the old. The aristocratic liberty which they had aimed at from the beginning they aimed at still. When the poet burst forth in his bitter cry of treason :—

O Comes Gloverniæ, quare cecidisti ?

Gloucester would, no doubt, have pointed to the oath of Ludlow as a proof that it was Leicester and not he who had been untrue to the cause. The oath was a proof of his deep distrust of his ally :—

Recepto a domino Edwardo prius apud Lodelawe corporali sacramento quod si eo juvante posset obtinere victoriam, antiquas leges bonas et approbatas faceret observari, pravas consuetudines quae in regno inoleverant abrogari, et quod regem induceret ut alienigenas a regno et a concilio suo amoveat, nec permitteret eos habere custodiam castrorum vel aliquid genus administrationis in regno, et quod res indigenarum sive fidelium consilio regeretur, adhaesit eidem in multitudine virtutis suae, eidem egeno et bonis omnibus spoliato quicquid necessarium fuerat subministrans.

The words are enough to prove the absurdity of

the common notion that Evesham was a "Royalist victory." The men who stood victors over the mangled corpse of Earl Simon were men as resolute as he was to enforce the Great Charter and its results against the King. But for the moment it roused a mad Royalist reaction, which swept everything before it till the greed and vengeance of Henry and the Marchers culminated in the outrageous disinherison of half the realm in the Parliament of Winchester. What is Edward's attitude in the face of this reaction? In other words, how far was he true to the oath he had sworn? A single month had placed England in his hands. Pitted against a master in the art of war, he had proved himself the first general of his day. Men had seen no such strategy as Edward's since Richard's crusade in Palestine and John's attempt to surprise Philip under the walls of Château-Gaillard. Evesham had been the fitting crown of movements unrivalled in their simplicity, their rapidity, their success. He stood at the head of the Royalist party with a renown and an influence which left Henry a puppet in his hands. It was a moment to test the real greatness that was in the man. Had he been the hero he has been painted, he would have stood forward to rebuke all thought of further hostility, to point to the corpse of Earl Simon, and to declare that henceforth Englishmen were one. What he did was to suffer the reaction to go on in its mad career. It is the barons who save the realm; the "twelve peers" wrest the

Ban of Kenilworth from Henry; Gloucester and the City of London, by their armed intervention, in the following year secure the benefits of its amnesty for the realm at large. But there is no trace of Edward's mediation. The Osney chronicler, on the contrary, brands him as joined with his father in the merciless extortions which followed the victory. Gloucester, in the manifesto which declared the purpose of his successful rising, expressly stated as one of his main objects that of compelling Edward to keep his word:—

> Quinimmo confingebat quod pro commoditate regni dominum Edwardum nitebatur inducere, ut sacramentum quod sibi praestiterat, quando sicut supra tetigimus apud Hereford de custodia Comitis tam prudenter evasit, tanquam honestum et toti regno pernecessarium vaniora meditans observaret.

A public charge of treason to a solemn oath such as this, whether the charge were true or false, proves at any rate that Gloucester and his party—a party which at that moment numbered every patriot in the realm—had little belief in the special truthfulness and fidelity to his word which people in our own days are so ready to claim for Edward. Nor was it a mere passing outburst of irritation; two years afterwards Gloucester still looks for danger from the treachery of Edward, "quod dominus Edwardus subdolas sibi machinabatur insidias"; nor, when he left for the Holy Land, would he leave Edward in the realm. The fact is that Edward has profited much by the reckless invectives of Scottish patriotism, and

still more by his lucky choice of a motto. In the reaction against the first it has been forgotten that his honesty in Scotch affairs can only be saved at the expense of his understanding, and in the enthusiasm over his "Pactum serva" his admirers hardly remember that he uniformly kept his word in the spirit of a pettifogging attorney.

LONGMAN'S EDWARD III[1]

I

(1869)

BEGUN simply as a continuation of the unpretending Lectures on English History which appeared about five years ago, the Life of Edward the Third has grown into an independent work of some length and importance. Mr. Longman's two volumes afford, in fact, a very fair specimen of a class of historical literature more common in France than among ourselves—the detached "study" of a period or person viewed in greater detail than the general course of history would allow. It is obvious that studies of this kind have both advantages and disadvantages; that, if they encourage closer and more accurate research, they are specially exposed to the danger of hero-worship; that proportion is apt to be forgotten and the greater currents of history to be lost, while intellectual and moral forces which tell only on long intervals of time are overlooked in the crowd of

[1] *History of the Life and Times of Edward the Third.* By William Longman. 2 vols. London: Longmans and Co. 1869.

minor incidents which affect human action directly and at once. But, on the other hand, it is certain that memoirs and biographies and studies of this kind are the feeders of history. It is from the mass of circumstances which gather round them that the historian can alone draw his materials for the larger treatment of the fortunes of a nation. Social facts, above all, can only be revealed by minute researches into the life of individuals, and characters treated in this isolated way acquire a vividness and reality which they still retain when transferred to a broader canvas. In a word, the historian deprived of these outlying aids is like an army whose communications are cut off and whose supplies have to be gathered on the march. The chances are in such a case that the supplies will be bad in quantity as in quality, gathered at haphazard, and insufficient when gathered. It is not too much to say that the want of preliminary studies of such a kind as this is in reality the great difficulty with which English historians have to contend. We may take as an instance the last work of any magnitude which has illustrated a great period of our history—Mr. Freeman's account of the Norman Conquest. As its readers know, it will, when completed, cover the whole space from the accession of Ethelred to the death of the Conqueror—a century of memorable events and remarkable men. But over the whole of this space Mr. Freeman moves with hardly any other help than his own personal research. No scholar has cared to tell the story of the final

struggle with the Dane, or of the reign of Cnut, or of the extinction of the first foreign dynasty. When he arrives at Godwine, Mr. Freeman finds, indeed, the ground prepared, but it is by some old papers of his own; Harold has found no *vates sacer*, the Confessor is left buried in the legends of Westminster. One or two archæological papers of little or no value alone represent the literature of the great battle which decided the after fortunes of the realm. Only the sketchy chapters of Thierry tell the story of the Norman settlement; the most worthless biography in the English language, that of Mr. Roscoe, remains the one biography of the Conqueror. The case is still worse if from the outer aspects of history we pass to the inner—if we ask for memoirs on the literature, the laws, the religion of the last period of Old English history. Dean Hook's paper on Bishop Wulstan is a solitary contribution to our knowledge of the last; the two former subjects have not even found a Dean Hook. And yet is it precisely these phases of national progress which demand the previous labour and smelting of the special inquirer; it is impossible even for industry like Mr. Freeman's to cover singly the vast field of society and intelligence through which he passes, and the result is, in one after another of our historians, the sense of something wanting—of a want of "the one thing needful," the moral and spiritual life without which history is nothing but an old almanac.

We are quite ready, therefore, to welcome such a

special contribution to historical knowledge as Mr. Longman has made in the present work. The book has real merits—the merits, at any rate, of accuracy, of industry, of good sense. There is very little hero-worship about it, a certain sobriety of judgment and calmness of tone save its author from raptures over chivalry or a vapid imitation of the picturesqueness of Froissart. An evident effort is made throughout to teach at least the social and industrial life of the people itself. But while we are quite ready to fling aside the "picturesque incidents" of the story of our childhood, we could have wished that Mr. Longman had been able to invest the facts which he details with an interest as vivid if more true. Seen through the spectacles of chivalry, no doubt the reign of Edward is merely a pretty sham and delusion; but we are afraid that ordinary readers will prefer to retain their delusive spectacles till the historian can exhibit his facts in an order at least as attractive as the old. Such an interest will hardly be discovered till he is willing to stop at home instead of seeking his interest in Crécy and Poitiers. Some day, let us hope, it will dawn upon writers and readers that the history of England is to be found not in France or Germany or Austria, but in England itself; that there is yet a story to be written which never has been written, and that that is the story of the people amongst whom they live; that the enfranchisement of English boroughs by Richard Lion Heart is more important than his Crusade, the printing-press of

Caxton than the Wars of the Roses, the preaching of the Wesleys than the contests and friendships of Pitt and Newcastle. When that day arrives it may possibly be discovered that Crécy and Poitiers are among the most insignificant facts in the period of English History which we call the reign of Edward III. We may be content to loiter over the pages of Froissart, as of old, without taking the conception of society and events which give us the measure of aristocratic intelligence in the fourteenth century as the precise measure for our own. The rise of a great trading class on the ruins of the purely feudal baronage will occupy the first place in the narrative of the time. The mighty social, intellectual, and religious revolution which produced Chaucer, Wycliffe, and Lollardism will form its close. Mr. Longman, with all his details and summaries and careful notices of Acts of Parliament, feels round the edge of questions of this sort, but without a frank acceptance of them as the basis of his work. The result is, as we have said, a sense throughout of accuracy and justice, but with this sense of coldness, a want of enthusiasm and breadth of view which throws a certain weariness and languor over the book. Such as it is, however, we are really grateful for it.

It is, we suppose, the original character of Mr. Longman's history as a mere continuation of his previous lectures which must account for the strange omission of the whole of Edward's life before his accession to the crown. The omission, however, is a

singularly unfortunate one; for it is in the aristocratic revolution which seated Edward on the throne that we must look for the real key to the earlier history of his reign. The victory of the Baronage at once over the people and the Crown which began at Evesham, culminated in the deposition of Edward II. It is useless to seek a precedent for that deposition in the case of Ethelred the Unready as Mr. Longman follows Mr. Freeman in doing. The deposition of Edward was a sheer feudal *diffidatio*, the mere withdrawal of a revolted baronage from the military relation to a baronial over-lord. Under the son and the grandson of Henry III. the older notion of national kingship had almost disappeared. The government of the country, in spite of the desperate rallies of the Crown, was in the hands of the Baronage and the Church. The legislative declaration of the right of a peer to be tried by his peers—the exemption, in a word, of the baronage and the ecclesiastical hierarchy from the common justice of the land—followed significantly enough on the deposition of the King. It was the ratification of their victory. Throughout Edward's early years the Crown is actually in wardship; power rests with the Council of Regency, the mere representatives of an oligarchy, jealous as oligarchies are ever jealous, and incapable as oligarchies are generally incapable. It is by fixing one's eye on the Scotch war that one is able to detect its influence and its policy. The war with Scotland had long ceased to be a war of the Crown; it had never been a war of the

people. The crime of the Second Edward, in the eyes of his baronage, had been his policy of peace. To the great noble, devoured by his own hungry retainers, peace was ruin. War meant the maintenance of his military household at the cost of the State; the chance of booty, of captives to be ransomed, of broad lands to be won, for himself. The triumph of the nobles in the deposition of Edward II., their second triumph in the murder of Mortimer, was in each case followed by an instant renewal of the war, and it is significant that in the last case the war began with a return of the recalcitrant barons—Beaumont and his fellows—whose bitter opposition to the peace had sprung from the necessary restitution which it involved of the lands they had won from the Scots. The temporary successes of Balliol, the victory of Halidon Hill, the capture of Berwick, the cession of the Lowlands to Edward III., only preluded the desperate struggle of five years which exhausted the resources of the realm, while it filled the pockets of the nobility. The war marks the period of their rule, and what their rule was Mr. Longman has told simply enough. Turbulent, without sense of law, playing loosely with life (few of them lived to see forty), faithless and distrustful, reviving here and there the private feuds and petty warfare of Stephen's chaotic reign,—it is amusing to turn from the charming chit-chat of the early chapters of Froissart to such a page of real history as this:—

Armed men infested the courts of justice and endeavoured to

overawe the judges. Great numbers of men banded themselves together in large bodies, living in woods and forests, robbing all persons that came in their way, seizing even the King's judges and extorting money from them by means of ransom ; and the nobles, instead of aiding the sheriffs in punishing them, kept these robbers in their pay and protected them. Jousts and tournaments were forbidden unless under special leave. They served for the rendezvous of armed persons ; from the number of places at which they were held, they were evidently a popular form of amusement, and they furnished convenient opportunities for gathering together, and plotting if need be how to defeat the law. Special keepers of the peace, to be afterwards developed into the county magistrates of the present day, had been ordered to be appointed . . . but they were not able to put down the robbers, and at one time, consequently, it became necessary for the King himself to march at the head of a body of soldiers to attack and disperse them.

That such a state of things should make even their puppet Mortimer, when really entrusted with the reins of power, long for peace, is not to be wondered at. But even misrule at home was not to prove the worst and most fatal result of this aristocratic government and its aristocratic love of plunder. Over a century of English history, corrupting national sentiment, blighting national progress, crushing literature and religion and freedom with its iron weight, enslaving the clergy to the Papacy, turning the merchant into a pirate, chaining the labourer in a new serfdom to the soil, hangs the cloud of the great French war. If we had to select the most praiseworthy pages of Mr. Longman's work, we should choose those which illustrate dryly, but with perfect clearness, the origin of the war with France. Whatever were Edward's

faults, the great crime of having, out of sheer ambition, doomed two great peoples to an age of misery certainly does not rest at his door. Nothing is clearer from the facts which Mr. Longman has collected than the desperate tenacity with which Edward clung to peace with Philip. But day by day the struggle with Scotland made peace more impossible. France could not stand by and see her most valuable ally trodden under foot. With greater and greater pertinacity, Philip forced on the war. Edward, on the other hand, conscious that the conquest of the North was hopeless if France once frankly interfered, submitted, year by year, to wrong and insult, in the hope of averting the struggle. It was in vain that Philip afforded a refuge to Bruce when driven from his throne, that he suffered French adventurers to enlist for Scotland, that he kept up the vexatious quarrels about Aquitaine, that Scotch ships were fitted out with his sanction at Calais, that he forced a truce on Edward in the midst of his victories, that at the moment when Scotland seemed reduced to submission her hopes were revived by French promises of aid. Nothing but the actual threat of invasion, the gathering of fleets in the Channel, the harrying of the coast, could force Edward into war.

Mr. Longman has followed very carefully the course of the tangled negotiations and preparations with which the great struggle began—the intrigues of Philip with the North, with Spain, with Genoa, the struggles of Edward even to the last against his

fate. Nor is it less interesting to note how completely the war opens as a mere feudal rather than a national war; the King surrounded by Imperial allies, by the chivalry of Lorraine, unwilling frankly to break with the Count of Flanders, even while he intrigues with the Flemish democracy, wasting money, waging war in chivalrous fashion, marching, counter-marching, doing nothing, spending all. It is hard to say all the time whether either of the combatants is in earnest. The tangled web of negotiation with Philip, with the Pope, is taken up again at every interval of the campaign. The first phase of the war ended at last, as every feudal struggle ended, in failure and despair. Heavily in debt, his alliance with the Empire dissolved, Scotland wrested from him, his coast ravaged, the realm lawless and discontented, Edward at the close of 1340 had had enough of this Barons' war. Mr. Longman has painted very clearly the real sufferings of England amid all the chivalry and prowess of Edward's Flemish campaign; the seas swept by Philip's fleets, the suspension of commerce, the burning of Portsmouth and the Cinque Ports, the terrors of invasion along the coast. No war was ever at its opening more unpopular than the great struggle which was fated to become a national passion. It was the sympathy of the burgess class with the communal movement in Flanders, the hatred it imbibed from thence of France and its feudalism, the deep resentment of the merchant body for the persistent outrages of France during the following

truce upon its trade, that enabled Edward at last to put the war on a national footing, and won for him the victories—more fatal to England than a thousand defeats—of Crécy and Poitiers.

II

(1869)

THE issue of his first war with France had left Edward a beggar, his Scotch conquests lost, his military efforts the derision of Europe. The victory of Crécy, the utter prostration of the French power at Poitiers, made him at one bound the first prince in Christendom. Chivalry sought its glory in the two great battles which did more than all else to sweep chivalry away. It found its historic representative in a king whom, with a truer instinct, his French rival termed "the wool-merchant." It is amusing to see how completely throughout his life Edward assumed the position of "the King Chivalrous," a king of tourneys and adventure, of feasts and lady-loves, and how completely the facts of his reign belied the assumption. Mr. Longman sees in a dim way the contrast as it etches itself out in the character of Edward:—

> The character of the times in which he lived deeply impressed itself on that of the King himself, and is strikingly manifested in the purposeless character of much of his war

with France. It was the venturesomeness of war, its stirring strife and magnificent pomp, that delighted him, as it has delighted barbarians in all times. Possessed of a fine person, "having a god-like face," as an old chronicler says, he loved, like his prototype Alexander, to display himself surrounded by a gorgeous array of thousands of splendidly arrayed followers at the Court of the Emperor, or of the King of France ; or clad in singular but magnificent apparel, at feasts and festivities such as those which followed the establishment of the Order of the Garter. Courage he possessed in an eminent degree, combined, however, with no small amount of chivalrous rashness. . . . Of his personal character in other respects but few traces remain, and some of them are not such as to excite much admiration. Conjugal fidelity at that time was not considered a necessary virtue in sovereigns, and certainly was not practised by Edward the Third. In this matter it is but fair to judge him by the habits of the times, but his disgraceful subjection in his old age to a worthless woman was the natural sequel to a licentious life, and deeply stains the conclusion of his reign. That he was unscrupulously despotic is clear enough from the facts mentioned in the course of this history, and that he was cruel and revengeful is far from doubtful when his conduct to the burgesses of Calais is considered. . . . Manly courage and personal energy are the chief noble qualities that can be assigned to him. He had, besides, the questionable virtue of indomitable will. The commercial prosperity of the nation during his reign was great, and he deserves credit for laying the foundations of English manufacturing industry by his encouragement of Flemish weavers ; but the progress made must be attributed to causes arising, unintentionally on his part, from the advantages of increased foreign intercourse, and from the concessions he was compelled to make to his subjects in order to obtain the means of gratifying his warlike passions and his love for inordinate splendour, rather than to a wise foresight directing the policy of his reign.

Policy Edward had none. Throughout his reign he was driven along by social forces of whose very

existence he had no conception, and over whose development he exercised no control. At its opening he is the first baron of the English baronage, the chief of chivalry, the mere brilliant leader of a brilliant worthless aristocracy. At its close he is, as Philip called him, the "wool-merchant," the king of the trader. The failures of the early campaigns, the exhaustion of the nobility, the breakdown of chivalry as a fighting power, had consummated the great revolution which for a century past had been raising the merchant class into an element of the State. As English history is written nowadays, we suppose we must not blame Mr. Longman that, in writing the history of Edward the Third, he has left unnoticed the great cardinal fact of his reign. But the truth is, that the whole history of England during the fourteenth century is summed up in the elevation of the merchant class. Evesham was the victory of the burgher as it was the victory of the baronage—a victory, in the case of the first, over democracy and the *minor populus* of the towns. In the greater political struggles of the Barons' war the communal struggles of English towns have been, very naturally, passed over; but in each the party of De Montfort was the party of revolution, claiming for the whole people a share in the commune, freedom of government, freedom, above all, of trade. In each, the *majores*, the greater folk, the landed proprietor of the soke or aldermanry, the wealthy member of the merchant guild, jealous of power, greedy of gain,

are for the Crown. The triumph of Edward and feudalism over democracy and De Montfort was, above all, their triumph. In London, in every town, a merciless reaction followed on the momentary revolution. The leaders of the *minor populus* were killed, pillaged, exiled. All municipal power, the very right, now first becoming important, of electing members to Parliament, was concentrated in the burgher body. The guild system, imprisoning trade within the same narrow limits, took an immense development. Steadily through the three Edwards the merchant class seize and strangle the old communal liberties of the towns. The great Rebellion of Bristol under Edward II. represents the last desperate struggle of English democracy against the *bourgeoisie*. For good as for evil the new power leaves a deeper and deeper stamp on the new national legislation. The Mortmain Act, the greater facilities afforded for investments in real property, the improvements in police and judicature, the law of debt, witness to the advance of its influence. Under Edward I. a commercial spirit begins to tell upon public policy, to draw tighter the Flemish alliance, to dictate the sack of such a rival merchant-centre as Berwick. It is amusing to see those great heroes of chivalry doing the work of blood simply to satisfy the greed of the trader. Against his will the trading class forced Edward I. into his struggle with France; the Cinque Ports declared war and waged war for themselves, bearding the King and his Council with insolent

defiance: "If wrong or grievance be done them they will go seek through the seas where they shall think to make their profit." Edward gave in to the trader as he gave in to the noble; and the trader went on to wrest from him the expulsion of the Jews. The Jew was the King's purse, the one chattel absolutely at his disposal, the one financial resource of the Crown. But commercial jealousy was too strong for such a king as Edward. The traders are the new power of their day, jostling roughly with the older powers of the State. "We will sooner go to hell than be taxed," was the famous reply of the Dunstable burgesses to the menaces of the Church; and when noble marauders plunder Boston Fair, they are hung, noble as they are, imploring pity of the burgesses standing round. This gradual advance of the merchant class under the first two Edwards brought it fairly to the front under their successor. It was a new day for England when a merchant vintner could entertain the King in his house at St. Martin's, or when (we do not notice the fact in Mr. Longman's account), in a tournament at London, Edward figured as its Mayor, his two eldest sons as the Sheriffs, his lords as City Aldermen. Partly, no doubt, this sudden revolution was owing to the great development of commerce, as we see it in the regulations of the *Liber Albus*, and to the new energy given to English manufactures by the emigration from Flanders. But it was still more owing to the utter collapse of feudalism. Every day made it

clearer to the keen cynical trader that the great governing class, whose whole claim to govern rested on their fighting power, could not fight. Bannockburn was the first great revelation of their military incompetence; Crécy was the second. But the whole French war, its empty skirmishes, its pompous marches, its harrying and plunder, its merciless bloodshed, its utter want of purpose or aim or success, lingered on year after year, as if to show the hollowness of the whole system. Charles V. only represents the universal sneer of the world in his famous instructions to the French forces not to engage with their opponents. "Let them go. By burnings they will not come to your heritage; it will weary them, and they will all go to destruction. Although a storm or a tempest rage over a land, they go away and disperse of themselves. So will it be with these English." Such a fool's death as that of Chandos, such a massacre as that of Limoges, such an old age as that of Edward, showed the helplessness, the infamy of chivalry. But the collapse of Lancaster's expedition in 1373 was its deathblow. Never had knighthood started in a more imposing guise. The mightiest army England could pour out had simply marched across France without a blow, and without a blow it was turned by a few simple marches into such a horde as Napoleon brought back from Russia:—

> Winter was now approaching, and the country they began to traverse was bleak and barren. The Limousin, Rouergue,

and the Agenois did not supply them so well with food as the rich country they had left; and they were sometimes nearly a week without bread. In the sterile mountains of Auvergne they fared worse; for they could get food for neither man nor horse, and their relentless pursuers had increased from one to three thousand. Their horses died in vast numbers; more than 30,000 are said to have marched from Calais, but it was a mere fraction of that number that reached the journey's end alive; the army was utterly starving, and as Walsingham says, it was a miserable sight to see "famous and noble soldiers, once delicate and rich in England, without their men or their horses, begging their bread from door to door, nor was there any who would give it them." At last, about Christmas, after a march of six hundred miles through France, they reached Bordeaux a horde of miserable fugitives.

But while the ruin of the war fell on the noble, its gain and its glory were reserved for the trader. The expedition which ended in Crécy was the result of his commercial jealousy of the flourishing Norman towns. Caen surpassed every English city save London. The drapers of Louviers looked down on the infant manufactures of our southern and eastern coasts. The sack of Louviers and of Caen, the three hundred rich citizens, the four thousand bales of cloth which the victors sent home as the spoil of the latter city (why does Mr. Longman omit such a fact as this?), consoled the burghers of Norwich or of Winchelsea. The world-famous siege of Calais was really a commercial act. It was the will of the English trader which fixed the chivalry of Edward for twelve weary months beneath its stubborn walls. Edward was the mere mouthpiece of his good subjects of London in his expression of hatred against

its citizens for the "damage they had done on the sea in times past." Calais gave the English merchant the mastery of the Straits, so needful for the Flemish trade. At home he reaped the spoils of the war, while knight and baron reaped hard blows abroad. "There was no woman that had not got garments, pins, feather-beds and utensils from the spoils of Calais and other foreign cities," while the good wives of London "began to glorify themselves in the dresses of the matrons of Celtic Gaul." Capital had indeed a yet fiercer struggle to wage at home than even feudalism abroad, and one even more destructive to the welfare of England. From the time of Edward begins, as Mr. Longman has well pointed out, the great war between employer and employed, which still rages, though not with its old intensity, in our own. It began in the greed of the capitalist. Within the towns the merchant guilds stripped trade of all freedom, and built a gigantic system of monopoly on the ruins of the communal liberties. No theory is more ridiculous than the theory which looks on guilds as the bulwarks of commerce against the violence of feudalism. The very date of their power might suffice to prove that all danger from feudalism was past. The real danger was the danger of the people, of the small employer, of the independent workman, elbowed into serfdom by the narrowing influence of capital. The whole legislation of Edward's reign is directed to the artificial building up of a wealthy merchant aristocracy, to the ruin of

the free trader. The class of little retailers, the middle-men of commerce, were attacked in the statutes against forestalling and regrating; the concentration of trade within the favoured staple cities was a fatal blow at the industry of smaller towns. But it was the guild system within these towns itself which most effectually destroyed the small trader. No man throughout Norfolk might buy nets, hooks, or other fishing instruments except "owners of ships that use the mystery of fishing." Had Mr. Longman passed from Acts of Parliament to the records of London, he might have multiplied his instances of the oppressive inner legislation of the towns. But, great as their oppression was, it was as nothing compared to the oppression exercised by employers of labour without their walls. The Statute of Labourers remains the one great legislative act in modern history by which a governing oligarchy ever ventured to reduce a whole population to slavery. In the midst of Froissart's tales of glory or war, the reader hardly pauses to notice the ravages of the Black Death; but the mark of the Black Death remains on English society to this day. In a few years one half of the population of the land had been swept away. "The sheep and cattle strayed through the fields and corn, and there was none who could drive them." Labour rose naturally in the market, and with the rise in the price of labour came the terrible Statute of Labourers. "The employers," as Mr. Longman fairly puts it, "combined to keep down

wages by the terrors of legislation." A scale of wages was fixed. All aid, all charity, to those who refused it was made illegal. All secret hirings and contracts were forbidden. An oath to observe these ordinances was imposed on the whole of the labouring classes. They were imprisoned within their own county and restrained from seeking work elsewhere. By a Fugitive Slave Act, of unexampled atrocity, the whole rural population found itself reduced to prædial bondage, bound to the soil. "If any of the said servants, labourers, or artificers do flee from one county to another because of this ordinance, the sheriffs of the county where such fugitive persons shall be found, shall do them to be taken at the commandment of the justices of the counties from whence they shall flee, and shall bring them to the chief gaol of the said county, there to abide till the next sessions of the same justices." When the gaol failed, the Parliament tried branding. The escaped bondsman might be "burnt in the forehead with an iron formed and made to this letter F in token of falsity." It was to this that the rule of the triple oligarchy of the baron, the burgher, and the priest had brought England after a century of their sway. It is this which forms the terrible reverse of the history of Crécy and Poitiers. It was to escape from this that the great socialist risings under Edward's grandsons shook England to its foundations. It was the pressure of this that forced men to questions like Ball's "When Adam delved and

Eve span, who was then the gentleman?" to Wycliff's inquiry whether a mere brute force like this was any legal power at all, whether dominion were not founded in grace, in something really worthy of the allegiance of man? Pauperism is one legacy which feudalism has left us; it was the Statute of Labourers, and not the dissolution of the monasteries, that forced on England the Act of Elizabeth. The bitter strife between employer and employed is the other. To every artisan, to every ploughman in the land, the one memorial of Edward's reign is not the thought of Crécy or the proud keep of Windsor, but something infinitely simpler and deeper—the gentle means of persuasion which the Parliament ordered to be made "in every township betwixt this and the Feast of Pentecost"—the first sign of the warfare between labour and capital—the village stocks.

THE FIRST ENGLISH "MURRAY"

(1869)

At a time like this, when we are all dipping into our "Murrays," and discounting in imagination the joy of getting out of town, it is amusing to remember what a very modern discovery that of the pleasure of travel is. In any other sense indeed than that of business, the mere journey of merchant or envoy from market to market or Court to Court, travel itself is the creation of the last three hundred years. If we set aside the pilgrim and the Crusader, who were simply the spiritual bagmen of their time, the Jew and the Moslem were the only real travellers of the Middle Ages. It was, in fact, the comparative peace and settlement of the fifteenth century, the awakening of the thirst for knowledge, the desire to find teachers and manuscripts and printing-presses and literary patrons, that suddenly flooded Europe with the wandering scholars of the Renaissance. Then came the great shock of the Reformation, breaking down national isolation by the zeal of the propagandist, the flight of the exile, the march of

armies. The two influences told less on England than on any country of the Continent, but the sudden arising of a spirit of travel in the days of Elizabeth showed that even England had drawn nearer to the rest of the world. To make the great tour, above all to visit Italy, became the mark of every Englishman of breeding. The Jew on the Rialto, the brawl in the streets of Verona, were sights and scenes familiar in real life to the nobles who looked on at the dramas of Shakespeare. For the time, indeed, martial adventure told a little against the tide; the young squire who listed under Raleigh or Drake made a grander tour than any Europe could give him. But at the close of the great struggle with Spain the Continent offered the nearest and most tempting outlet for the wandering spirits of Englishmen. The odd thing is that not one of them went there in the spirit in which men go to-day. The bulk, of course, voyaged simply for pleasure, but for pleasure to be found, not in sight-seeing or in nature or in the study of art, but simply in new forms of social enjoyment. The young Englishman rode and danced and fenced and flirted across Europe; if he lounged at Paris, it was to study the last fashion of "apparell"; if he pushed on to Naples, it was to learn "the great horsemanship." But even the graver sort of travellers had a purpose quite as unintelligible to us. With them "Peregrination" meant "the true Peripatetique school," whose high aim was nothing less than "to enrich the mind

with variety of knowledge, to rectify and ascertain the judgment, to compose outward manners, and to build one up to the highest story of perfection."

Howell's *Instructions for Forreine Travell*, a little duodecimo of 1642 of which Mr. Arber has just given us a reprint, present us with a charming picture of the means by which this great end was to be brought about. No trivial gleam of a month's run abroad, no vision of the delight of "settling your tour as you go along," had as yet broken on the British mind. Above all, travel was a luxury strictly denied to the mob who nowadays flood Switzerland or the Rhine. Howell's voyager is, by assumption, a young nobleman, and he goes with an "equipage" befitting one. "He may entertaine a Cook, a Laquay, and some young youth for his Page to parley and chide withall, whereof he shall have occasion enough, and to get some faire lodgings to keep house of himself; but sometimes he may frequent Ordinaries, for it will much breake and embolden him." The concession is graceful enough; the traveller makes these little social dips throughout his career, but his true field lies everywhere in the Court. The tour—as we have said—is no holiday ramble; it is a stately progress, in which its hero passes "the diameter of France," runs over Spain, crosses the Mediterranean to Italy, climbs the Alps, traverses the best part of Germany, dips into Belgium, and studies Holland; "all which may bee done compleately in three yeares and foure months, which foure

months I allow for itinerary removals and journeys, and the yeares for residence in places." For such a voyage somewhat extensive preparations were needful. Guide-books there were none, but "*Bertius* or the *Epitome of Ortelius*, which are small and portable," might serve the turn for topographical description. But this is the least part of the preparation. The traveller must be well founded and settled in religion, well prepared in those sacred spots "where, I say (I presume that my Traveller hath bin first an University man), beside other introductions to knowledge he hath sucked the pure milke of true Religion and orthodoxall Truth." After religion he must be well versed in the topography, government, and history of his own country, "for some are found to be eagles abroad and stark buzzards at home"; and with a view to this he may run over Camden and Daniel and the Commonwealth of Sir John Smith. Add to this Latin and the use of the globes, and the traveller's "packing-up" is complete. One thing he must not forget. "He must alwayes have a Diary about him when he is in motion of Iourneys, to set down what either his eares heare or his Eyes meete with most remarquable in the daytime, out of which he may raise matter of discours at night." Nor is this to be the whole of his literary exertion; he is to be very punctual in writing to his friends "once a month at least" (happy rarity of seventeenth-century posts!), "which hee must do exactly, and not in a carelesse perfunctory way." Lastly, he must

take sufficient money. Every one of his servants, Cook, Lackey, and Page, "will stand him in £50 a year." For his own expenses he cannot allow himself less than £300 for the same space of time.

With such a preparation, and at such a cost as this, our young noble can hardly be expected to throw away his time simply on sight-seeing. "It was the saying of a great Emperour that he had rather go fifty miles to heare a wise man than five to see a faire City." Some things, indeed, he may be pardoned for looking at—"the Escuriall in Spain, or the Plate-fleet at her first arrival; St. Denis, the late Cardinal-Palace in Richelieu, and other things in France; the Citadell of Antwerp; the New Towne of Amsterdam, and the Forrest of Masts which lye perpetually before her; the Mount of Piety in Naples." But the picturesque, if it peep in at all, peeps in in the shyest and oddest fashion. It is hard to say whether any sense of their historic or artistic interest mingles with the counsel to see the "Imperiall and stately Hans Towns of Germany," or the Duomo and Castle of Milan. But it is significant enough that when Howell has brought his pupil to Venice, with its palaces yet fresh from the builder's hand, and the walls of its Council Chamber still glowing with the unfaded tints of Titian and Veronese, he bids him observe that "there are many things in that Government worth the carying away, specially the sight of Nova Palma, a Castle built after the newest rules of Fortification." The fact is,

the traveller in the theory of the day was at school, and was paying far too dearly for his education to fritter time and money in mere eye-service to art. His business was to know the world and the ways of the world. Instead of staring at frescoes and broken goddesses, "he must apply himself to know" in every place "the fashion and garb of the Court, observe the Person and Genius of the Prince, enquire of the greatest Noble-men, and their Pedigree (which I recommend to his speciall consideration), of the Favorits and Prime Counsellors of State, the most eminent courtiers, and if there bee any famous man to seek conversation with him." But to qualify himself for this improving intercourse the faculty of conversation had to be gained, and the greater part of the time spent in a country must be spent simply in acquiring its tongue. Even this, however, might be facilitated by a little compliance with foreign usages, by chatting, for instance, at the nunnery grate in moments when one has nothing to do, "for the Nunnes speake a quaint Dialect, and besides they have most commonly all the Newes that passe, and they will entertaine discours till one be weary," especially if one bestow an English glove or riband on them in the pauses of chat. There was a certain Spanish doctor, says Howell, who had a fancy that three languages were spoken in Paradise,—that God commanded in Spanish, the Tempter persuaded in Italian, and Adam begged pardon in French. The three languages at any rate, if no longer useful for

traversing Paradise, were indispensable for the Grand Tour, and French, as it was the most indispensable, was the hardest of all. Howell wails piteously over the hard case of English mouths :—

> The younger one goeth to France the better it is, because of the hardnesse of the accent and pronunciation to an English mouth, which will be hardly overcome by one who hath passed his minority, and in this point the French tongue may be said to be like Fortune, who, being a woman, loves youth best. Whereas for other Tongues one may attain to speake them to very good purpose, and get their good-will at any age, the French Tongue, by reason of the huge difference 'twixt their writing and speaking, will put one often into fits of despaire and passion, as wee read of one of the Fathers who threw away Persius against the wals, saying, "Si non vis intelligi debes negligi"; but the Learner of French must not bee choleric awhit at that, but though she neither writes as she speakes nor pronounce as she writes, yet she must not shake you off so; but after a little intermission hee must come on more strongly, and with a pertinacity of resolution set upon her again and againe, and woo her as one would do a coy Mistres, with a kind of importunity, untill he overmaster her, and she will be very plyable at last.

At each step in his progress from Paris to Rotterdam the young Englishman should combine the useful with the entertaining. Thus, "at his first comming to any Citie he should repaire to the chief Church—if not Idolatrous—to offer up his sacrifice of thanks that he is safely arrived thither; and *then* some have used to get on the top of the highest Steeple, where one may view with advantage all the Countrey circumjacent, and the site of the City with the advenues and approaches to it, and so take a Landskip of it." Paris is hardly worth sketching in

this fashion, being as it is simply a "hudge though durty Theater of all Nations," and in Spain he will rather note the curious opposition of the nation with that which he has quitted: "The Frenchman buttoneth alwayes downward, the Spaniard upward; it is a kind of sicknesse for a Frenchman to keep a Secret long, and all the drugs of Egypt cannot get it out of a Spaniard." In Italy, "that great limbique of working braines," he must be circumspect in his carriage, "for she is able to turne a Saint into a Devil"; so after noting its fortresses he may pass on to the "rugged republics" of Switzerland, through the "proud cities" of Germany, to the great "Cockpit of Christendom." The Netherlands will show him Leaguers a-foot and armies in motion; in the States of the United Provinces he may study commerce and trade.

It is easy to smile at Howell's conception of travel, but hardly easier than for Howell, could he rise again, to smile at ours. To the men of the seventeenth century travel meant simply the Grand Tour, and the Grand Tour meant an essential part of a liberal education. The interval between the boyhood of University life and the manhood of the Inns of Court could hardly be better spent than in studying the language and manners of the world. We have advanced far beyond the ideas of Howell's day by our discovery of the pleasure of travel, but Howell would probably plead that we have lost something of the use of it. There is one thing more absurd than Howell's young nobleman studying the "rugged

republics" of Switzerland without a thought of the Matterhorn, and that is the Alpine Clubbist standing proudly on the conquered Matterhorn in self-satisfied ignorance of its "rugged republics."

SIR WALTER RALEIGH[1]

(1868)

Few lives seem so tempting to the biographer as that of Raleigh, and yet there are few from which the reader turns with so vivid a sense of disappointment. About once in every ten years the old story of the Virginian plantation, the stock anecdotes of the potato and tobacco-plant, the defeat of the Armada and the sack of Cadiz, are served up to us by way of piquant sauce to the weary mysteries of "The Bye and the Main," and the yet wearier problem of the expedition to Guiana. Every fresh discovery of half a dozen State papers brings us a new "life"—a new treatise, that is, on the envy of Cecil, the mendacity of Cobham, the dexterity of Gondomar, or the poltroonery of James. But, in any living or true sense, life of Raleigh there is none. It is amazing that the industrious gentlemen who busy themselves so exclusively with Raleigh as a man of action don't see that few lives of men of action have exercised less direct influence on the

[1] *Life of Sir Walter Raleigh.* By Edward Edwards. 2 vols. London: Macmillan and Co. 1868.

history of their times. It is natural enough for us, with our estimate of the man, to assume that he must have played a great part in events, but the facts are dead against us. Under Elizabeth, Raleigh is not even a member of the Royal Council; he ranks as a seaman far below Effingham or Drake; in military matters he has the repute of being "no captain"; he serves in all the great expeditions of the day as a subordinate officer; he is perhaps more isolated from the people, more detested by them, as by the nobility, than any man of his day. To the world, in fact, he stands out as the mere minion of an aged queen, gorged with places and monopolies, proud and grasping, and yet even as a minion ranking rather with the second class of favourites, the Blounts and the Huttons, than with Essex or Leicester. Whatever his position was, however, it is lost at the accession of James. He is ruined by the failure of schemes which even now remain obscure, he is condemned for plots which are still a mystery, the weary close of his life sees him a prisoner, and a few political tracts with an unfinished History are all that remain of his imprisonment; at last he stakes his head on the issue of a puzzling political struggle, and an even more puzzling piratical enterprise, and loses it. His life, then, is one of a very different stamp from those of Cecil or Walsingham, and seems at first sight to stand far below lives like those of Bacon or of Shakespeare. And yet we fully accept the unanimous verdict of popular opinion—the opinion

alike of men who saw him die and of his biographer of to-day—which places his name in historic importance far above Walsingham or Cecil, which ranks it as a typical name with those of Shakespeare and Bacon. Raleigh is in fact the one representative of Elizabethan England. We seem to understand better its strange medley of good and ill, its higgling and its heroism, its poetry and its pedantry, the noble purity of its *Faerie Queen* and the foul immorality of its Court, its puritanism and its scepticism, the grandeur and the trickery of its policy, its false romance and its real chivalry, when we see them all blended in Raleigh.

But then this very complexity of character, which makes him a fit subject for biography, makes his biographer's task a very difficult one. To paint a man who is himself the picture of his age, requires a pen very different from the pen of Southey, Mr. Tytler, or—we fear we must add—of his present biographer. Mr. Edwards is contemptuous, and no doubt justly contemptuous, of the efforts of his predecessors; his zeal and industry in the collection and verification of his materials are beyond all praise; and, as we shall presently point out, he has thrown real light on the puzzling questions of Raleigh's last expedition. There, however, our praise must end. The book is not merely confined to the external aspects of Raleigh's life, and without a single word from beginning to end that could throw the least light on the inner meaning of it, but it is disfigured

by the exaggerated and defensive tone of a blind partisan. All the interest of a nature so richly mingled disappears in the constant adulation which pronounces Raleigh the wisest of statesmen and the purest of patriots. The Introduction to the *History of the World*—a fine piece of rhetoric, but in any historical sense about as valueless as a piece of rhetoric can be—is authoritatively pronounced to be a "brief but pregnant summary, which in seven pages has given much of the pith of several volumes of annals." The air of being on stilts which runs through this pretty passage pervades the style of the book; we have the usual sprinkling of strong Carlylese sentences that scorn a verb, and a profusion of nicknames which Cobbett might have envied—"gaol-bird Baily," "Sir Judas Stukely," and the like. It is election-time, but in two thick biographical volumes one might have hoped for an escape from the commonplaces of the hustings. Here, however, is the opening sentence of the book: "Whatever may be the triumph which the Future keeps in store for democracy, there seems to be a fair probability that the pedigree of a famous man will never quite lose its interest." What has democracy got to do with the question? Has Mr. Edwards never heard of certain democratic mountain cantons of Switzerland, or does he fancy that houses like that of the Redings have no pedigrees? But the same sort of political sniffing meets us in every corner. When Raleigh's unpopularity is in question, we are favoured

with a little Tory dissertation on the difference between "the people" and "the populace." The difference drops very naturally out of sight when Sir Walter becomes popular. But the most amusing thing in the book is an instance of the literary vengeance which historical inquirers may henceforth bring to bear upon the possessors of documentary treasures. Lord Salisbury spreads generously before Mr. Edwards the relics of the Burleigh papers, and Mr. Edwards shows due gratitude by assiduously writing up the younger Cecil. The owner of Sherborne Castle, on the other hand, keeps his muniments to himself; and Mr. Edwards devotes a couple of pages to exposing, *à propos* of nothing at all, the successive misdeeds of each member of the House of Digby.

The second volume of Mr Edwards's biography is, however, a really valuable addition to our historical stores. It is a great thing to get a complete collection of Raleigh's letters; and Mr. Edwards has not merely added largely to the number already known, but he has doubled their value as biographical materials by his accurate revision of the text of those which had been printed before, and by the very careful and critical notes and introductions with which he has accompanied them. Unfortunately, the great bulk of this correspondence comes from the Burleigh papers, and is concerned with public matters. With the exception of the touching letters to Lady Raleigh, nothing is left that throws light on Raleigh's private life and temper. We confess that we would willingly

exchange the whole of his correspondence with Cecil for half a dozen of the letters that must have passed between him and Edmund Spenser. Naturally, too, these official letters are very unequally distributed over his life; they lie mainly in groups, and illustrate a few prominent events—such as the capture of the great Carrick, and the trial in 1603. Of his youth, of his life at Court, of his mysterious alliance with Cobham, of his literary associations, of his colonial plans, of his supposed "atheism," of his scientific researches in the Tower, they tell us little or nothing. It is startling indeed to find how little we actually know of the life of Raleigh. A Devon boy, linked by ties of blood with famous Devon houses, his life really opens with the Huguenot wars. The old commonwealth of Europe had fallen to pieces in the clash of religions; and while its Cabinets still clung to the traditions of a purely political balance, men really drew together, in defiance of those traditions. Englishmen and Frenchmen forgot their nationality in their Protestantism at Moncontour, as Spaniards and Irishmen forgot theirs in Catholicism at Smerwick Fort. It was this unconscious severance between the Government and the people that gave birth in England to that sudden outburst of individual life and energy which is the noblest characteristic of the age of Elizabeth. It is Hume, if we remember rightly, who pronounced the Queen's government to have more nearly approached the Turkish model than any in Europe, before or since. But, in truth, never

was country, in the deeper sense of the word, less governed; never did individual action play a greater part in a people's history, or administrative action a less. The nation left its statesmen to their endless despatches and their diplomatic jealousies, while it took its own part in the great struggle of which they so imperfectly understood the importance to the world—the struggle against Catholicism. Champernown leads his regiment at Jarnac, Drake sweeps the Southern seas with a few cock-boats, Humphrey Gilbert carries over his Devon tenantry to back the Prince of Orange, without any license, far less any mission, from their sovereign. English squires and English seamen make war while Elizabeth and Burleigh hold their hands and sign protocols. But this royal "holding hands" was a very serious matter for men like Raleigh. The four thousand who sailed from the West for Rochelle knew that, if captured, they would be hung with a scroll round their necks, explaining that they had "come against the will of the Queen of England to the help of the Huguenots." In the end they conquered that will, as they conquered Spain. From her accession till 1588, England was slowly tugging Elizabeth, in spite of her resistance, into the stream. The open war with Spain that followed was a confession that henceforth the policy of England would be determined, not by the Crown, but by the people. It was the desperate struggle of the Stuarts to fall back on the older system, the political reaction which was embodied in the peace

with Spain, which brought inevitably about the open collision between the national will and the will of the sovereign which culminated in the Great Rebellion.

We have dwelt on this national aspect of the Huguenot war because, little as we know of Raleigh's share in this earlier struggle, the principles which it embodied became the guiding principles of his life. A soldier in France, and perhaps in the Low Countries, six years' ruthless service in Ireland brought him at last into the charmed circle of the Court. He starts as a Court favourite, and—if we believe what Mr. Edwards believes, and what certainly every contemporary observer believed—as something more. It is the one disgusting period in Raleigh's career. It is not pleasant (in spite of Spenser's exquisite verses) to think of Timias coying with his regal Belphœbe while his half-brother Humphrey Gilbert is going down in the great storm, "as near to heaven by sea as by land"; or of the lying and acting of the disgraced lover in the Tower, while his kinsman Richard Grenville, in that memorable fight about the Azores, was dying "with a joyful and quiet mind, for that I have ended my life as a true soldier ought to do." The great bulk of Englishmen saw nothing in Raleigh then but the pride and haughtiness that goes before a fall, and looked on with little sympathy at his desperate efforts to "underprop himself" against the whispers of the new favourite. His disgrace lifted him, at any rate, into higher air than

this. He had already planned the first of English colonies. His part in the three great expeditions to Guinea, Cadiz, and Ferrol gave him fame as a seaman and a soldier. In Parliament his clear-sighted intelligence had begun to show itself in pleadings for the then unpopular Brownists, and in denunciations of laws against opinions. It is startling to find him urging, against Cecil and Bacon, the repeal of the Statute of Tillage, and the "setting corn at liberty." But there was no change in popular opinion about him. Of all the Court favourites he had won the bitterest popular hate. He was still loaded with monopolies and confiscations. Babington's forfeiture had given him lands in four English counties. He was buried in Court intrigues, and the world credited him with the ruin of Essex. United with Cobham, he seems, in the last moments of Elizabeth, to have disputed the supremacy of the younger Cecil. But what the real aim of Cobham and Raleigh in this alliance was is another matter; and, in spite of the care with which Mr. Edwards has stated the question of the succession and the conspiracy, we fear it is destined to remain a mystery. It is almost certain that Raleigh, both then and after, was steady in his opposition to a peace with Spain. But it is quite as certain that, for some end or other, he was cordially co-operating with Cobham at the close of the Queen's life, and that Cobham was secretly carrying on negotiations with Spain. Perhaps the most probable solution is that Raleigh was really playing with

Cobham to secure his co-operation in opposing the accession of James. At any rate that accession proved the ruin of both. A mock trial sent both of them to the block; the most comic of reprievals imprisoned both of them in the Tower.

It is that life in the Tower that gives us the real Raleigh of history. All that is ignoble in him seems to fall away. His intellectual keenness and breadth, his moral greatness, his poetic power seem suddenly to have ripened into full life. Our estimate of the historical value of the *History of the World* is very different from that of Mr. Edwards; but there is in the book a peculiar union of a keen passion for research with an imaginative and poetic temper, which gives it a marked position in literature. Like Bacon, he dabbles in chemistry, in the new world of physics which was just opening. We wonder that Mr. Edwards has forgotten the pretty story in which Mrs. Hutchinson tells us she owed her skill in doctoring to Sir Walter. Stray traditions associate with his prison almost all the most noted names in the scholarship and literature of his day. What is still more remarkable is that as a prisoner he became, what he never had been before, a real centre of English politics. It is on this latter part of Raleigh's life, before so unintelligible, that Mr. Edwards has really thrown considerable light. He points out that on the great question of alliance with France or with Spain—the question, as we have before pointed out, whether the political direction of English affairs

should be with king or people—the Court itself was divided. But it is round Raleigh that the whole French or popular party seems to gather. It is he who supports the Queen and Prince Henry in their opposition to the Spanish leanings of James. His release, attributable as it is to Winwood, the Secretary of State, whose sympathies are known to have been steadily against Spain, seems to mark a temporary victory of the French party in the Cabinet. The ordinary notion that the release was a mere plot of the King's to bring about his ruin is without any foundation. James was forced to release him, and there can be little doubt that Raleigh contrived his release with the one view of reversing James's policy. To force on a war with Spain by rousing the old buccaneering spirit, by exciting the minds of Englishmen to the plunder of the Spanish dominions in America, by stirring such a popular movement as should sweep James's resistance before it, seems, as far as we can see, to have been Raleigh's aim. We believe him to have been perfectly sincere in his projects on the Plate fleet; while his stay with the ships at the mouth of the Orinoco was so far from hinting at peaceful measures, that he himself tells us it was for the purpose of fighting the Spanish galleons if they appeared. Even his failure would not have ruined him. What ruined him was the death of Secretary Winwood in his absence, and the restoration of the Spanish policy under the growing influence of Buckingham. It was as a peace-offering that

James flung his head to Spain. A theory such as this at any rate gives a rational explanation for conduct which is usually painted as that of a mere maniac and desperado; it explains such curious problems as that of the project on Genoa; while it removes from the King the stigma of a merely fiendish malignity.

MARGARET, DUCHESS OF NEWCASTLE[1]

(1872)

THE first period at which woman makes her appearance in our national literature is that of the Great Rebellion. Learned and accomplished as the group of ladies educated in the Court of Henry VIII. seem to have been, we possess no works from the pen of Anne Askew or Lady Jane Grey; no woman comes to the front as poetess or dramatist in the great Elizabethan outburst, or figures among the ranks of the theological controversialists of the reign of James. Female authorship, in fact, however great the development which it seems destined to receive in our own day, dates only from the Memoirs of Mrs. Hutchinson, of Lady Fanshawe, and of the Duchess of Newcastle. We are the more indebted to Mr. Russell Smith for a reprint of two of the most characteristic works of the rather eccentric peeress who figures last on the

[1] *The Lives of William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle, and of his Wife, Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle.* Written by the Thrice Noble and Illustrious Princess, Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle. Edited, with a Preface and Occasional Notes, by Mark Antony Lower, M.A., etc. London: John Russell Smith. 1872.

list, from a belief that it needs only a wider acquaintance with her biographies to bring about some modification in the judgment which has been handed down to us from her contemporaries. The stately and pedantic maid-of-honour, who had passed from the Court in Merton Gardens to a life of exile with her lord, returned from Antwerp to find herself as much out of date as Clarendon himself. The wits scoffed at her pedantry, her interminable sentences, and the elaboration of a style which, like that of the great Chancellor, preserved the tone of an age which had passed away. Even amongst the languor and tediousness of the Lives or the *Olio* we find something of the "linked sweetness long drawn out," of Hooker or Milton. The writers of her own sex, the Mrs. Behns and Orindas of the Restoration, could find nothing but contempt for a woman who openly professed to "abhorre an unclean thought," and devoted folios to the adoration of her husband. Even now, when husband-worship has come into fashion again, we stare a little at such idolatry as that of the Duchess of Newcastle, at a wifely devotion which proclaims her lord irresistible, which paints the charms of his person, jots carefully down the very commonplace sentences which dropped from his lips as if they were the quintessence of wisdom, and takes us, page after page, into the stables to admire his dexterity in the manège. In spite, however, of faults such as these, it is impossible to read the Duchess without a genuine admiration for her. Cumbrous as

her style often is, it is just as often simple and unpretending, and by a rare chance it is as free from the false rhetoric of the days of Elizabeth as from the false wit of those of Charles II. In her actual story there is all the simple-heartedness, if there is some of the tediousness of a child. She tells us about herself, her shyness, her chastity, her bursts of temper, her love of honour and truth, as if her reader were closeted with her for the most private of chats. She has none of the little jealousies of women; she looks on her lord's "conquests" as the most natural and becoming thing in the world; she worships her mother as she worships her husband; she looks with the same eye of undisguised admiration on brothers and brothers-in-law; even to hated Puritans, who had turned her out of house and home, her allusions are of the most reserved and dignified order. There is something, too, exquisitely piquant in the very notion of the biography itself. It is surely the only extant instance of a husband's life written by a loving wife in her husband's lifetime. The Duke, indeed, if we are to credit his spouse, deserved some sort of literary return:—

Your Grace remembers well (says the Duchess, in her preface) that those Books I put out first, to the judgment of this censorious Age, were accounted not to be written by a Woman, but that some body else had writ and publish'd them in my Name; by which your Lordship was moved to prefix an Epistle before one of them in my vindication, wherein you assure the world upon your honour, That what was written and printed in my name, was my own, and I have also made known, that your

Lordship was my onely Tutor, in declaring to me what you had found and observed by your own experience ; for I being young when your Lordship married me, could not have much knowledg of the world ; But it pleased God to command his Servant Nature to indue me with a Poetical and Philosophical Genius, even from my Birth ; for I did write some Books in that kind, before I was twelve years of Age, which for want of good method and order, I would never divulge. But though the world would not believe that those Conceptions and Fancies which I writ, were my own, but transcended my capacity, yet they found fault, that they were defective for want of Learning ; and on the other side, they said I had pluckt Feathers out of the Universities ; which was a very preposterous judgment.

His advice on the subject of his own biography was at any rate of a dignified order which tells well for himself, though it has told greatly against the interest of the book. He commanded its author "not to mention any thing or passage to the prejudice or disgrace of any family or particular person, although they might be of great truth, or would illustrate much the actions of your life." The command has been dutifully obeyed, but the life of the Duke still retains much that renders it of essential service to the historian of the Great Rebellion.

For the war in the North, indeed, the first book of this biography, which gives an account of the Earl's services as Commander of the Royalist force in the North up to the defeat of Marston Moor, is of the highest value. The Duchess was as yet only a girl in the Queen's suite at Oxford, without a dream of her high destinies, and the information she gives is derived from John Rolleston, the Earl's secretary,

and from the papers in her husband's possession. But from this she has drawn up a minute narrative of the campaign, which must be regarded as of primary authority on the Royalist side. William Cavendish, the hero of her biography, owed all his honours to the house of Stuart, and he repaid its bounty by an unquestioning devotion. He was grandson of Sir William Cavendish, a courtier and Privy Councillor of the Tudor sovereigns, who is memorable as the builder of Chatsworth, and whose house became enriched by a succession of wealthy marriages, the alliance with the heiress of the Ogles especially giving it large estates and influence in the North. Cavendish himself had been ennobled by James I. and raised to the earldom of Newcastle by his son. On the eve of the great struggle with the Parliament we find him retired into the country "with an intent to have continued there and rested under his own vine and managed his own estate," which gave him an income of some £22,000 a year, or a sum which would now be equivalent to four or five times that value. There seems, in fact, to have been little expectation of an immediate struggle when the King's command appointed him Governor of the four Northern counties of Durham, Northumberland, Cumberland, and Westmoreland. The Earl found no military preparation made, "nor generally any great encouragement for the people in those parts more than what his own interest created in them." It was with a regiment and a troop of horse raised from among his own Northumbrian

tenantry that he secured Newcastle-on-Tyne and the port of Tynemouth, "playing his weak part with much prudence," and gagging the preachers of the North by a commission with Dean Cosens at its head. The King, while withdrawing his troop of horse, sent him nothing save "a little barrel of ducatoons"; but a supply of arms from Denmark, including "regiment pieces and Danish clubs," enabled him to equip the larger force which the increasing violence of the struggle seemed to call for. A wider commission made him General of the Forces for the country north of Trent and for the Eastern counties, and in November 1642 he was ready to occupy York with an army of eight thousand foot, horse and dragoons. The Duchess gives an interesting account of the campaign which followed, and which was principally directed against the West Riding, the only part of the county which seems to have been strong for the Parliamentary cause. The contest fairly began with the opening of 1643, when an engagement of horse on Seacroft Moor left Leeds and Wakefield at the Earl's mercy, and after detaching 7000 men to reinforce the King's army in the South, he found himself strong enough to wrest from Fairfax a decisive victory at Atherton Moor, which left him undisputed master of Yorkshire, where only the fortress of Hull was held for the Parliament. His reduction of Lincolnshire had been planned as the prelude to a march southwards, which might have decided the fortunes of the war, but the activity of the Hull garrison recalled

him at the critical moment to the North, and though Derbyshire was easily won for the King, the Earl had only just gone into winter-quarters round his own house of Welbeck when he was called to meet the army of the Scots. From this moment success was at an end, and the fruits of a year of victory were lost in a few days. The Earl found himself hemmed in at York by the combined action of the Scots, the Hull garrison, and the forces of the Eastern counties, and when Rupert's advance at the end of a two months' siege had relieved the town, the Royalist cause was suddenly wrecked in the great overthrow of Marston Moor. The battle was, in fact, a surprise, and the Earl was quietly resting in his own coach when it began :—

Not long had my Lord been there, but he heard a great noise and thunder of shooting, which gave him notice of the Armies being engaged : Whereupon he immediately put on his arms, and was no sooner got on Horseback but he beheld a dismal sight of the Horse of His Majesties right Wing, which out of a panick fear had left the Field, and run away with all the speed they could ; and though my Lord made them stand once, yet they immediately betook themselves to their heels again, and killed even those of their own party that endeavoured to stop them ; the Left Wing in the mean time, Commanded by those two Valiant Persons, the Lord Goring and Sir Charles Lucas, having the better of the enemies Right Wing, which they beat back most valiantly three times, and made their General retreat, in so much that they sounded Victory.

In this confusion my Lord (accompanied onely with his Brother Sir Charles Cavendish, Major Scott, Captain Mazine and his Page) hastening to see in what posture his own Regiment was, met with a Troop of gentlemen Volunteers who formerly had chosen him their Captain, notwithstanding he

was General of an Army; to whom my Lord spake after this manner: "*Gentlemen,*" *said he,* "*You have done me the honour to chuse me your captain, and now is the fittest time that I may do you service; wherefore if you'l follow me, I shall lead you on the best I can, and shew you the way to your own honour.*" They being as glad of my Lords Profer, as my Lord was of their Readiness, went on with the greatest Courage; and passing through Two Bodies of Foot, engaged with each other not at forty yards distance, received not the least hurt, although they fired quick upon each other; but marched towards a Scots Regiment of Foot, which they charged and routed; in which encounter my Lord himself kill'd Three with his Pages half-leaden Sword, for he had no other left him; and though all the Gentlemen in particular offer'd him their Swords, yet my Lord refused to take a Sword of any of them.

His courage was, however, in vain; the Royalist army was dispersed, and Newcastle, half in humour at his own dismissal from the command, half desperate of any possibility of the renewal of the struggle, fled over sea.

We need not follow the Earl in the wanderings which form the rest of this biography; the one fact of any importance is that on joining the exiled Court at Paris he met and married his wife. There "it was my fortune to see him for the first time, I being then one of the maids of honour to Her Majesty; and after he stayed there some time he was pleased to take some particular notice of me, and express more than an ordinary affection for me; insomuch that he resolved to choose me for his second wife." Margaret Lucas was the sister of the well-known Sir Charles Lucas, whose death after the surrender of Colchester has left the only stain on Fairfax's memory,

and the fortunes of her house had gone down in the same storm which had wrecked those of the Earl. Much of the earlier married life of the two spouses consisted in shifts to keep the wolf from the door, and at one time we find his steward telling my lord

that he was not able to provide a Dinner for him, for his Creditors were resolved to trust him no longer. My Lord being always a great master of his Passions, was, at least shew'd himself not in any manner troubled at it, but in a pleasant humour told me, that I must of necessity pawn my Cloaths to make so much Money as would procure a dinner. I answer'd, That my Cloaths would be but of small value, and therefore desired my Waiting Maid to pawn some small toys, which I had formerly given her, which she willingly did.

Expedients of this sort, however, were soon at an end, and we find the new Countess dancing attendance to very little purpose on the Committees of Sequestration, in the hope of receiving some small part of her lord's wealth. It was during these two years' stay in England that she wrote her Poems and *Philosophical Fancies;* her *World's Olio* having been composed before this time. The little help she managed to procure enabled the Earl to "light on a house that belonged to the widow of a famous picture-drawer, Van Rubens, which he took," and to hold his creditors at bay till the news of the Restoration enabled him to return. Here is a true pathetic touch in the "mirth" of his voyage home, and in his first sight of London smoke:—

My Lord (who was so transported with the joy of returning into his Native Countrey, that he regarded not the Vessel)

having set Sail from *Rotterdam*, was so becalmed that he was six days and six nights upon the Water, during which time he pleased himself with mirth, and passed his time away as well as he could; Provisions he wanted not, having them in great store and plenty. At last being come so far that he was able to discern the smoak of London, which he had not seen in a long time, he merrily was pleased to desire one that was near him to jogg and awake him out of his dream, for surely, said he, I have been sixteen years asleep, and am not throughly awake yet. My Lord lay that night at *Greenwich*, where his Supper seem'd more savoury to him than any meat he had hitherto tasted; and the noise of some scraping Fidlers, he thought the pleasantest harmony that ever he had heard.

The joy, however, was soon destined to be dashed with disappointment. Newcastle's services were acknowledged with a Duchy, but he found himself among the "old Loyalists" who got nothing but ingratitude and civil speeches from the restored monarch. The new Duke retired in dudgeon to Welbeck, and devoted the rest of his life to the restoration of his estates. His losses during and after the war are reckoned by his wife at almost a million—an enormous sum if it be multiplied, as it must be, to bring it up to the present value of money. He had left England, in fact, the wealthiest of English peers; he returned to find himself a poor and beggared man. It is in such a scene of desolation as one passage in this biography brings home to us—a scene which must have been common whenever an exiled noble returned to his house—that we must look for an explanation of the bitterly persecuting spirit displayed by the Royalist party after the Restoration:—

Of eight Parks which my Lord had before the Wars there was but one left that was not quite destroyed, viz. Welbeck Park of about four miles compass; for my Lord's Brother, Sir Charles Cavendish, who bought out the life of my Lord in that Lordship, saved most part of it from being cut down; and in *Blore-Park* there were some few Deer left. The rest of the Parks were totally defaced and destroyed, both Wood, Pales, and Deer; amongst which was also *Clipston-Park* of seven miles compass, wherein my Lord had taken much delight formerly, it being rich of Wood, and containing the greatest and tallest Timber trees of all the Woods he had; in so much, that onely the Pale-row was valued at £2000. It was water'd by a pleasant River that runs through it, full of fish and Otters; was well stock'd with Deer, full of Hares, and had great store of Partriges, Poots, Pheasants, etc., besides all sorts of Water fowl; so that this Park afforded all manner of sports, for Hunting, Hawking, Coursing, Fishing, etc., for which my Lord esteemed it very much; and although his Patience and Wisdom is such that I never perceived him sad or discontented for his own Losses and Misfortunes, yet when he beheld the ruins of that Park, I observed him troubled, though he did little express it, onely saying, he had been in hopes it would not have been so much defaced as he found it, there being not one Timber tree in it left for shelter.

His one comfort in his seclusion and poverty must have been the ecstatic worship of his wife. "My Lord," she tells us, "may justly be compared to Titus by reason of his sweet, gentle and obliging nature"; nor is his sweetness of nature his only merit, "I may justly call him the best Lyric and Dramatick poet of this age." That he was its greatest general and its wisest statesman, she was never weary of assuring both him and the world. Page after page at the close of his Life are spent in the elaborate exhibition of the roll-call of admirable qualities which she gives

us as his character—his fidelity, his fairness, his self-command, his civility, his clemency, his courage, his modesty, his generosity. "In short," the Duchess closes at last, fairly out of breath, "I know him not addicted to any manner of vice, except that he has been a great lover and admirer of the female sex, which, whether it be so great a crime as to condemn him for it, I'll leave to the judgment of young gallants and beautiful ladies." We might perhaps in the same way safely leave the Duchess's ecstasies to the compassionate verdict of young husbands and adoring wives.

THE POET VAUGHAN

(1867)

THE eve of the Great Rebellion forms a very marked epoch in the history of Jesus College. No foundation had experienced, or was destined to experience, more varied fortunes. It might well have looked for patrons both from the Church and from the Court. For if Christ Church was the last and grandest effort of expiring Mediævalism, if Trinity and St. John's commemorated the reaction under Philip and Mary, Jesus—by its very name—took its stand as the first Protestant College of the University. Its founder had been educated at the suppressed Abbey of Oseney; its site had belonged to the suppressed Priory of St. Frideswide. It claimed the great Protestant Queen as its Foundress, bore her image on the obverse of its seal, and enshrined her portrait in its Hall. The great Queen had given but her name to Drake; the more fortunate foundation gained in addition some loads of timber from the forests of Shotover and Stowe. The estates of Dr. Price brought in little or nothing. The Fellowships remained titular, and a

few Commoners — Welsh Scholars transferred from Whyte Hall — formed, with their Principal, the whole Society. The founder died ere his new buildings on the east front rose above ground, and the University wits jested at the inscription he left over the College gate—

> Struxit Hugo Prisius tibi clara palatia, Jesu,
> Ut Doctor legum pectora docta daret.

"Nondum," laughed Christopher Raynold as he passed by—

> "Nondum struxit Hugo, vix fundamenta locavit;
> Det Deus ut possis dicere, 'struxit Hugo.'"

In 1602, however, the clouds broke. Bishop Westphaling led the way to better things. Scholarships, Fellowships, Exhibitions flowed in fast. Under a succession of great Principals the fragmentary buildings rose into a College. During a Presidency of ten years (1620-30), the Eastern Quad was completed by Sir Eubule Thelwall; and his successor, Dr. Mansel, erected during the following ten half of the south, and as much of the northern side of the Western Quad. But forty years of prosperity had exhausted the fortune of the College. The zealous Principal was deprived. The Scholars enlisted under Rupert or Goring. An intruded Head found other uses for the College revenues than the completion of the deserted fabric. It was not till ten years after the Restoration that the present Library and the south side of the Western Quad were erected

by the munificence of our second founder; and 1713 saw the completion of the "long-tossed" College by the erection of the buildings at the north-western angle.

Dr. Mansel was in the very midst of his improvements when the subject of this memoir, Henry Vaughan, entered at Jesus in 1638. He was the younger of two brothers, of a family among the most ancient and notable of South Wales. Two of his ancestors, Sir Roger Vaughan and Sir David Gam, had fallen at Agincourt; and a recent alliance linked his house with the great Marches-family of the Beauforts. Shakspeare, so ran the tale adopted by Malone, had visited the Vaughans at their mansion at Seethcog, and in the neighbouring valley of Cwm Pooky, or Pwcca, the Goblins' Glen, had picked up the name and conception of his elfish "Puck." It was, however, at Newton, an after abode of the family, now a farm-house on the road from Crickhowel to Brecon, that the twin-brothers, Henry and Thomas, were born in 1621. "The situation," says his biographer, Mr. Lyte, "is a very beautiful one, well calculated to nurse poetic thought and feelings." Close by it ran the Usk, so often the theme of his Muse,—

> Garlands, and songs, and roundelays,
> Mild dewy nights, and sunshine days,
> The turtle's voice, joy without fear,
> Dwell on thy bosom all the year,

he sang in the collection of poems to which he prefixed its name, *Olor Iscanus*, "The Swan of Usk."

The young poet quitted his tutor, the Rector of Llangattock, at a time of great educational progress and religious change. The fussy energy of the Chancellor, Laud, was felt everywhere. Harder blows were dealt every day at the Puritanism, which since the Reformation had been dominant in Oxford. The Communion Table was removed from the body of St. Mary's to the east end of the Church, and its Pulpit closed against the weary controversies of the day. Over its porch the Archbishop's Chaplain placed the Virgin and Child. Heylin, his favourite, bearded the Calvinistic Professor, Dr. Prideaux, in his own Divinity School. Sheldon, in the same august presence, had argued against the orthodox formula of the day, that the Pope was Antichrist. "Quid, mi fili," interposed the astounded Professor, "negas Papam esse Antichristum?" "Etiam nego," replied the unabashed Doctor. Prideaux could only take refuge in sarcasm, "Profecto, multum tibi debet Pontifex Romanus, et nihil dubito quin pileo cardinalitio te donabit." The same energy found more useful scope in the promotion of education. Every year brought some present from the munificent Chancellor of books or MSS. for the Bodleian. New privileges were procured by his influence at Court. Twyne was busy compiling at his suggestion the statutes which still bear his name, and which formed an article in his impeachment.

An examination for degrees made education a reality. Sharp measures restored the discipline

essential to a place of study. A threat of "imprisonment in the Castle" repressed the republican licence of the Masters in their own Convocation House. The Scholars were "hunted out of ale-houses and taverns by the Vice-Chancellor's and Proctor's constant walking," and the Chancellor was "endeavouring to reform the breaking of drinking in Colleges and Halls," when the troubles of the time saved these last asylums of persecuted excess. The usual retaliations marked every step in the Chancellor's crusade. In the very year in which Henry Vaughan became an Undergraduate, the Proctor "who had been very strict in his office, having been much pressed by admonitions from the Chancellor, received great affronts and abuses both by hissing and hooting at him in St. Mary's chancel when he made his farewell speech, and in flinging stones at him on his return thence to his College." Sharp letters from Laud "downright schooled the Vice-Chancellor and Heads of Houses for suffering such disorders," and two or three of the more notorious were arrested and "publicly whipt." [1]

Whatever may be our opinion of the means employed by the Chancellor, there can be no question about their success. Oxford had seemed on the very verge of becoming a mere seminary of Calvinistic theology. More liberal studies retired before the din of controversy. Oxford orthodoxy proscribed whatever could not be found in meagre summaries of

[1] A. a'Wood, *Hist. of University*, ad annum 1638-9.

Anti-Arminian doctrine, or the "Corpus Theologicum" of the latest and most rabid of Dutch disputants. From this danger Laud rescued it. The Patristic studies which he introduced were, at any rate, infinitely broader and more liberal than the "handbooks" which they superseded. But the impulse which he gave did not end in the study of the Fathers. Unconsciously, the great founder of English Dogmatism became the originator of English Scepticism. The exclusive Anglicanism of Laud fostered the comprehensive spirit of Hales and the daring doubt of Chillingworth. No group of men ever left more enduring traces, whether on our literature, our history, or our Church, than that which the pen of a great historian, lingering fondly over memories so dear to him, has gathered round the table of Lord Falkland, at his house of Great Tew, but twelve miles from the University. We can but allude to it here; but it was a notable portion of the Oxford of the day, and Vaughan—young as he was—must have been brought in some degree in contact with it. Sheldon and Morley he must have met in the streets; the black hair and saturnine countenance of the world-famous Chillingworth, with his "habit of doubting," might be seen any day in Trinity Gardens; many would be ready to point out, as he often passed through, the diminutive person and cheerful face of the "ever-memorable" John Hales, and to whisper his ever-memorable saying, "I would renounce the religion of the Church of England to-

morrow, if it obliged me to believe that any other Christians should be damned." One other famous name must have been familiar to Vaughan, that of the Vicar of St. Thomas's, who died a year after his arrival. For nearly twenty years men had been digging (as they dig still) for recondite passages from the *Anatomy of Melancholy*, that "endless medley of learned quotations, floating and only just floating in a text of Rabelaisian humour" (as it has been well described), which has rendered the name of Robert Burton immortal. His strange, weird library, his charity, his facetiousness, his fund of anecdote and story, his incurable melancholy, his delight in listening over the bridge to the ribaldry of bargees, were doubtless part of the stock of Oxford conversation.

The general progress of the University did no dishonour to these great names. It was crowded with at least four thousand Scholars. Jesus partook in the general prosperity. The chapel had to be lengthened at its east end for the accommodation of the increasing Society. President Mansel, as we have seen, was planning the completion of a second quadrangle. But the summons of the Long Parliament sounded as a knell for Laud and Laud's work. The citizens rose against the obnoxious "privileges" which he had enforced. The old Calvinistic spirit broke out in the University sermons. The Puritans preached in public, plucked down maypoles, and forwarded complaints of the introduction of crucifixes and prostrations into College Chapels, to serve as articles

in Laud's impeachment. In a few months came the news of war. The King's proclamation was read at the market-place, and the University plate despatched to his treasury. The Rev. the Vice-Chancellor mustered the students and privileged persons in Christ Church Quad. A barricade blocked the road over Magdalen Bridge, and loads of stone were carried to the top of the tower to assist in defence. In October the Royal army poured in, fresh from Edgehill. Oxford became for five years the head-quarters of the Stuart cause. The King held Court at Christ Church, his Queen at Merton. Rupert mustered his horsemen in its streets for daring forays along the vales of Aylesbury or the Thames. Citizens and scholars raised earthworks, drilled in "Broken Heyes," or reviewed on Bullingdon. The Muses fled from the clang of arms. The New College Choristers broke up school to follow the Trainbands as they mustered in the Quad. Lectures and exercises died an unheeded death. The Schools were turned into granaries; and the scholars gamed, drank, and swore with their brother Cavaliers.[1] At last the wavering war went against the King. The dissolute beauties of the Court, who had jostled so strangely with the cassocks of Prideaux and Jeremy Taylor, fluttered off with Henrietta. Charles stole away from the city as Fairfax fixed his head-quarters on Headington Hill. On the 24th of June 1646, Rupert marched out at the head of the garrison, and

[1] Dr. Fell on A. a'Wood, ad annum 1646.

the Puritan General mounted guard at the door of the Bodleian.

Amidst the hubbub of war we see little of the Vaughans. Both, however, were zealous Loyalists; and the elder brother had certainly taken up arms for the King. It is uncertain whether Henry followed this loyal example; if he did, the career of Fairfax seems to have wrought a very complete conversion. There was a voice, he said in his poems the very next year, in a brother's blood which cried to Heaven against the shedder of it. The new proselyte to the doctrines of peace remained therefore at Oxford, and varied his residence with occasional trips to town. There, in defiance of Puritan gloom, a thinned company of wits and roysterers lingered round the memory of Jonson and Randolph at the Globe. The young poet plunged with a keen zest into their drink, their wit, and their song. His first little work is quite in the style of the circle, a bundle of amatory rhymes in the light, easy verse of the day.[1] Here is one of the most graceful :—

To Amoret, gone from him.

Fancy and I last evening walkt,
And, Amoret, of thee we talkt;
The West just then had stolen the sun,
And his last blushes were begun :

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[1] "*Poems, with the 10th Sat. of Juvenal*, Englished by Henry Vaughan, Gent., London : 1646." I have consulted a copy of this very rare volume in the British Museum Library.

We sate and markt how everything
Did mourn his absence ; how the Spring
That smiled and curled about his beames
Whilst he was here, now checked her streames ;
The wanton eddies of her face
Were taught less noise and smoother grace,
And in a slow sad channel went
Whispering the banks their discontent ;
The careless ranks of flowers that spread
Their perfumed bosoms to his head,
And with an open, free embrace
Did entertain his beamy face,
Like absent friends point to the West
And on that weak reflection feast.
If creatures then that have no sense
But the loose tye of influence
Though fate and time each day remove
Those things that element their love,
At such vast distance can agree—
Why, Amoret, why should not we ?

His patrimony was, however, inadequate for his sole support, and need soon drove him to study physic and retire from these gayer scenes to practise among the

brotherly ruffs and beards, and a strange sight
of high monumental hats

of his own country-town, Brecon. There discontent at the change and at the time, assumed in his *Olor Iscanus* the guise of a philosophic contempt. "Come then," he says to a friend,

and while the slow icicle hangs
At the stiff thatch, and winter's frosty pangs
Benumb the year, blithe as of old let us,
'Mid noise and war, of peace and mirth discusse.
This portion thou wert born for. Why should we
Vex at the time's ridiculous miserie ?

The terse and vigorous satire of the *Swan of Usk* indicated a period of transition in the poet's life. From the scholar, the soldier, the wit, he had dwindled into the village doctor, "the worst fed and hardest worked animal in the parish," to borrow Scott's jest, "except his horse." His poverty, his isolation among the rustic Roundheads, the extinction of his political and literary hopes under the iron heel of the Puritan *régime*, all pointed forward to the great change which was to mould and determine the character of his life and poetry. While his work was still in manuscript, he was struck down by a sore disease; and among the bitter thoughts which crowded round the bed where death seemed often present, the bitterest was the thought of the "follies" of his muse. That many were suppressed, that the rest were, by comparison with those of his fellow-loyalists, harmless, did little to soften his remorse. "Their guilt," he said long after, "can never be expiated without special sorrows." In George Herbert he found one whose genius had dedicated itself to higher things; his poems formed his comfort in the tedious years of his sickness; and on the model of *The Temple* were composed the occasional pieces which he collected in 1650 under the title of *Silex Scintillans*.

"The Wreath" tells very touchingly the scope and purpose of the new work—

> Since I in storms used most to be
> And seldom yielded flowers,

How shall I get a wreath for Thee
From those rude, barren hours?

The softer dressings of the Spring,
Or Summer's later store,
I will not for Thy temples bring,
Which thorns, not roses, wore.

But a twined wreath of grief and praise—
Praise soiled with tears, and tears again,
Shining with joy, like dewy days,
This day I bring for all Thy pain,
Thy causeless pain! and sad as Death
(Which sadness breeds in the most vain),
Oh, not in vain! now beg Thy breath,
Thy quickening breath, which gladly bears
Through saddest clouds to that glad place
Where cloudless quires sing without tears,
Sing Thy just praise, and see Thy face.

To the influence of the master whose "least convert" he loved to own himself, many pieces full of the weary conceits which the school of Herbert mistook for poetry bear tedious witness. But Vaughan rises ever and anon from these into a pure, serene inspiration peculiarly his own. What wondrous verse is this:—

I saw Eternity the other night,
Like a great ring of pure and endless light,
All calm as it was bright;
And round about it, Time, in hours, days, years,
Driven by the spheres,
Like a vast shadow moved, in which the world
And all her train were hurled.

Or again, what a compass of poetic power is shown in passing from this divine phantasy to the tender

grace of his "Departed Friends," with the broken lights of the unseen world flickering around its close.

They are all gone into the world of light,
And I alone sit lingering here ;
Their very memory is fair and bright,
And my sad thoughts doth clear.

It glows and glitters in my cloudy breast
Like stars upon some gloomy grove,
Or those faint beames in which this hill is drest
After the sun's remove.

I see them walking in an air of glory,
Whose light doth trample on my days—
My days, which are at best but dull and hoary,
Mere glimmering and decays.

Dear beauteous Death, the jewel of the just,
Shining nowhere but in the dark,
What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust—
Could man outlook that mark !

He that hath found some fledged bird's nest, may know
At first sight if the bird be flown ;
But what fair dell or grove he sings in now
That is to him unknown.

And yet, as angels in some brighter dreams
Call to the soul when man doth sleep,
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted themes,
And into glory peep.

Oh, Father of Eternal Life, and all
Created glories under Thee,
Resume Thy spirit from this world of thrall
Into true liberty.

We seem to catch here a far-off gleam of the coming *In Memoriam*, just as we almost *see* Holman Hunt's "Light of the World" in the sketch of the Divine Master visiting Nicodemus in the verses on "Night."

Dear Night! this world's defeat!
The stop to busie fools—care's check and curb;
The Day of spirits; my soul's calm retreat,
Which none disturb!
Christ's progress, and His prayer-time;
The hours to which high Heaven doth chime;

God's silent, searching flight!
When my Lord's head is filled with dew, and all
His locks are wet with the clear drops of night—
His still, soft call—
His knocking-time; the soul's dumb watch,
When spirits their fair kindred catch.

Those, however, who would read the deeper expressions of Vaughan's piety, we must, from want of space, refer to the book itself.[1] Nowhere have the varied experiences of a Christian soul been more spiritually portrayed. A religion, peculiarly tender, personal, and impassioned breathes in the poems of Vaughan. It is not a subject to be more than touched on; we must pass on to bid farewell to the sweet singer of our Israel. Forty years passed by, after the publication of his *Silex*, in unobtrusive quietude. We picture him, the kind silvery-haired old Doctor, riding along when

It was high spring, and all the way
Primrosed and hung with shade,

finding poems in the little bird whose

own warm wing
Thy pillow was.

[1] It has been edited by Mr. Lyte, for Pickering.

Or the burst of song at dawn,—

> Hark, how the wood rings,
> Winds whisper, and the busy springs
> A consort make!
> Awake, awake!
> Man is their High Priest, and should rise
> To offer up the sacrifice,—

journeying on to the humble tomb, graven with humbler words—

> Servus inutilis. Peccator maximus.
> Hic jaceo.
> Gloria + Miserere.

We often form our judgment of a religious cause from its noisy controversialist rather than from its spiritual representatives. But controversy dies away, and the new phase of religious life which they quarrelled over becomes the heritage of the world. Baxter's multitudinous folios rest undisturbed on their shelves; his *Saints' Rest* is a living word to thousands. What Wesley wrote against Toplady, what Toplady wrote against Wesley, the world is content to forget as it sings the "Love Divine" of the one, and the "Rock of Ages" of the other. It is no slight comfort in days such as these to remember that Laud is a dead word and Vaughan a living one. Time has rescued from ages of disputation all that was worthy and true, and the jewels which it has selected harmonise well with one another. The great epic of an Arian, the great allegory of a Baptist, *The Temple* of George Herbert and the *Saints' Rest*

of a Presbyterian, the *Silex* of Vaughan and the hymns of Wesley, the divine verse of Keble and of Father Faber,—all stand side by side on the same shelves, speak the same tongue, and express the emotions and experiences of the same One Church.

HELPS'S PIZARRO

(1869)

. . . .

The interest of the Conquest of Mexico lies in the men themselves; not in their story — for nothing is more ignoble or monotonous than their gold-seeking and their quarrelling — but in the bold variety of character that removal from the pressure of the world at home seems always to give. There is all the Kentucky air, the tall-doing and tall-talking air, about such a man as Ojeda, for instance. One day he goes out Indian-hunting with a hundred comrades, and when the force left in the fleet, hearing things are going badly, come up to the rescue, they find him the only survivor, almost dead with hunger, the marks of three hundred poisoned arrows in his shield, but still sword in hand. At another time a poisoned arrow having pierced his thigh, he orders two plates of iron, brought to a white heat, to be tied on to the wound. Even the surgeon shuddered, and had to be forced to his work by a threat of the gallows; but the remedy was effectual, though the leg was so horribly burnt

that a pipe of vinegar had to be spent in moistening the numberless bandages. There is the ring of the Far West about the last story, and Ojeda was an utterly worthless scoundrel; but still there is a certain attractiveness about such brutal defiance of peril and pain as this. Vasco Nunez is, of course, a man of a very different stamp, a man of genius in his way, and one feels that the discovery of the Pacific fell appropriately enough to him. No doubt the greatness of the find influences unconsciously our estimate of the finder, and there is some truth in the reflection of Mr. Helps:—

> Every great and original action has a prospective greatness, not alone from the thoughts of the man who achieves it, but from the various aspects and high thoughts which the same action will continue to present and call up in the minds of others, to the end, it may be, of all time. And so a remarkable event may go on acquiring more and more significance. In this case, our knowledge that the Pacific, which Vasco Nunez then beheld, occupies more than one-half of the earth's surface, is an element of thought which in our minds lightens up and gives an awe to this first gaze of his upon those mighty waters. To him the scene might not at that moment have suggested much more than it would have done to a mere conqueror; indeed, Peter Martyr likens Vasco Nunez to Hannibal, showing Italy to his soldiers.

But the lights and shadows of Vasco's life are at any rate striking enough, from the moment when he rolls out of the cask into the story—a cask in which he had found concealment—to the moment when, walking one evening—"an evening in the tropics, where nature is so large and gracious"—he sees the

stars of his fate in the heaven, and laughs as he recalls the astrologer's prediction of his doom. As a study of character Pizarro lies far below these, below even that elderly *furor Domini* the Governor Pedrurias. Among the conquerors of the West he is simply, as Mr. Helps puts it, the highest type of the common soldier—patient, courageous, faithful after a fashion, without one high sentiment of chivalry or of pity. He represents the one pole of human thought and action, as Columbus represents the other. But in the larger history of the world he has a deeper significance. Just because of his purely unromantic, commercial, businesslike aspect, he reflects far more faithfully than Cortez or Columbus the new impulse which their discoveries gave to the world. When the Cacique of Canopa looked on the "brabbling among the Spaniards about the dividing of the gold," he saw the first results of a new social motive-power suddenly added to the older powers of the world. The real dissolvent of the Middle Ages, the real secret of democratic equality, was found when at Cadiz and at Valladolid men were buzzing about the news of a marvellous river "where the natives fished for gold in nets." All Spain bent itself to fish in those waters. The wandering scholars, men like Erasmus and his friends, were doing much to break down the hard, rigid lines of the old social fabric of mediæval Europe. The ringing laugh of the Encomium of Folly marked the advent of a class and of a power

which would jostle rudely against, and in the end overthrow, the powers and the classes of the world in which it found itself. But the result was to be long in coming: culture seemed at first only to add a new element of distinction among men rather than to provide a ground of human unity; moreover, the actual acquisition of knowledge depended in so great a degree upon opportunities which wealth and station more easily afford, that in some ways it was but a new weapon given to the hands that were already strong. The change in the system of warfare, again, efficient as it was to change the relation of the older *noblesse* to the Crown, left untouched the inequality between the different classes of society; nor did the revolution that passed over the religious aspect of the world modify its social aspect. Against such a religious modification, indeed, in the only form it ever assumed, that of the Anabaptists and the Levellers, Luther and Cromwell struck as vigorously as Leo or Laud. But what these failed to do—at any rate to do at once—the "fishing for gold" did. Men poor and without means, mere labourers' sons like Ojeda, ignoble as Pizarro, changed the face of a great continent, overturned thrones, gave new realms to the sceptre of their sovereigns. For a while the gold they poured into her treasury actually sustained the falling greatness of Spain and moulded the fortunes of Christendom. But this was its least effect. Not to speak of the vast disarrangement of the existing distribution of wealth which resulted

from it, or the enormous impulse given to trade and the commercial classes, a new spirit, the spirit of money-making, began from that moment to play its part in the affairs of men. No doubt there is much truth in Dr. Johnson's often-cited remark, that there were few occupations in which a man could find more real profit to himself in soul and body than in making money. But what we are now concerned with is its effect on society. With the exception of the great Venetian houses, no part of the mediæval *noblesse* had dabbled in trade. But with the discoveries of Cortez and Pizarro this barrier between classes was broken down. In England, above all, Elizabeth, Cecil, the greatest ministers, the proudest barons of the realm, were glad to turn "venturers," and to fit out their little squadrons hand in hand with the trader and the merchant. The peculiar character of our own modern aristocracy indeed, based as it is, not on antiquity or ability, but to a great degree on the sheer influence of wealth, is really to be traced back to the gold raids of Pizarro. It is noteworthy, too, that then, as now, all this social modification of the older Europe was due to America. Nothing would be a more curious subject for philosophical inquiry than to follow the steps of that stress—as Mr. Kinglake would say—which the course of American development has put on the older institutions of Europe. Such an inquiry, however, would lead us far from Pizarro. It is in the simple roughness, the

want of distinction, the mere manhood of the man, that we feel his real relation to the future of the New World, and through that to the future of the Old. He is the first of that long series of "men of the people," backwoodsmen, rail-splitters, which ends with President Lincoln—men without the culture and refinement of society, but with a natural force and shrewdness and self-reliance that culture could never give. It seems to be the special office of America to bring out the value of mere manhood in the rough in characters such as these, and to disabuse the older world of its excessive faith in the accidental advantages of position or training. Of such mere manhood her story affords many nobler, few more genuine, instances than that of the conqueror Pizarro.

COWPER[1]

(1870)

It is not very difficult to point out the causes which have made Cowper one of the most popular among English poets. The purity both of his subjects and of their treatment, the pietistic tone which still endears him to the great religious party whose cause he delighted to plead, his domestic sympathies, his love of rural life, his common sense, the clear crisp English of his poems, have all had their part in his success. But there are, of course, far deeper causes than these. There are few intellectual qualities which are more delightful than humour, and Cowper was essentially a humorist. The humorous essays in the *Connoisseur* are his earliest prose compositions; "John Gilpin" is undoubtedly his most popular poem. His letters are models of polite fun—a fun as genuine and pleasurable as it is distinct from the wit of Horace Walpole. It is the humorist who "welcomes peaceful evening in" with stirred fire and closed curtains, and the

[1] *Poetical Works of William Cowper.* Edited by William Benham, Vicar of Addington. Globe Edition. London: Macmillan and Co. 1870.

urn steaming beside him; who finds his pleasure in peeping "through the loopholes of retreat at such a world" as the Babel around him; who lies awake half the night convulsed with laughter over his friend's story, and rises next morning to pen the famous ballad of the ride to Ware. The well-known legend of the origin of the "Task" brings out the air of light, cheerful badinage which was natural to the man. Cowper asked Lady Austen for a subject. "You can write upon any subject," laughed his friend; "write upon this sofa." And Cowper at once begins, with a smile upon his lip,

> I sing the Sofa, I who lately sang
> Truth, Hope, and Charity!

and rambles on with a humorist's waywardness—the waywardness of Rabelais or Tristram Shandy. His poetic tone is heightened and set off in the verses that follow, as in others it is cramped and controlled, by the shrewd eye of a man of the world. Whether he wanders, indeed, beneath "the cool colonnade" of poplars, or drapes himself in the censor's mantle, one discerns always beneath poet or pietist the same keen, quiet observer of the fancies and fashions of men. Cowper is the predecessor of Crabbe as a painter of real life, but his touch is finer, his humour and sensibility truer and more delicate. Scattered everywhere over his pages are vignettes of men and women as perfect in outline and tone as those of Addison. When the wind blows open the gypsy's rags and discloses "a tawny skin, the vellum of the

pedigree they claim," one almost fancies Mr. Spectator is again chatting with Sir Roger de Coverley and the fortune-teller. It is especially in his social figures that he recalls for us the neatness and precision of the great essayist. The group round the card-table, the chess-player with his "eye as fixed as marble," the art-connoisseur at an auction, Sir Smug at his patron's board, are all masterpieces of good-natured humour. But his range of observation is far deeper and wider than Addison's. The coarse despair of the farmer at Tithing day is as accurately painted as the vulgarity of the tradesman of Cheapside. The pathos of his picture of the broken-hearted servant-girl who haunts the common and "begs an idle pin of all she meets," is as irresistible as that of the story of Le Fevre. It is his humour that breaks out in Cowper's charming egotism. Half his attraction lies in his autobiographic tone. He is a Montaigne of a different stamp, chatting to us of his hares and his garden, his "fancies of strange images observed in the red embers" as he stoops over the fire, his friends and foes, his joys and sorrows. There is no poet whom we know so intimately. The address to his mother's picture is the memoir of his childhood :—

> When playing with thy vesture's tissued flowers,
> The violet, the pink, and jessamine,
> I pricked them into paper with a pin—
> And thou wast happier than myself the while,
> Wouldst softly speak, and stroke my head, and smile.

Each phase of his life, each habit, each liking is as

liberally laid open as in the self-revelations of the Gascon philosopher. Every one knows his early love of fields and flowers, his early study of Cowley, his learning Milton by heart, his walks arm-in-arm with Mrs. Unwin, his dislike of tobacco, his love for "the cups that cheer but not inebriate," his evenings with the tame hares gambolling over the carpet. His social taste is the taste of a genial Thackeray, with just the same touch of contempt for the rural snobbery around him. He chose the Unwins for his friends because he found them "the most agreeable people imaginable, quite sociable, and free from the ceremonious civility of country gentlefolks. The old gentleman," he adds characteristically, "is a man of sense, and as simple as Parson Adams." In kindly company like this his life expanded freely. The greater passions, struggles, interests of the world, were strange to him. He had his love-disappointment at the opening of his life, and one of the most remarkable of his early poems shows, as Mr. Benham in his admirable biography has pointed out, that the blow told more heavily than most of his commentators have been willing to allow :—

> See me, ere yet my destined course half-run,
> Cast forth a wanderer on a wild unknown !
> See me neglected on the world's rough coast,
> Each dear companion of my voyage lost !

A verse like this strikes, at the very opening of his poetical career, the note which closes it in the "Castaway." But his temper subsided early and

naturally into the milder delights of Mary Unwin's friendship or Lady Austen's society. He shrank from ambition as from passion; the rough energy of his age, its canal-digging and engine-building, its unsparing criticism, its audacious science, all were strange and distasteful to him. Something of the humorist's scepticism mingled with the natural shyness and timidity which secluded the poet from the world. The Cowper of popular legend is for once the Cowper of fact: it is only with his hares, or in the cosy seat beside the tea-table, or in the little arbour where he sang hidden like a bird in leaves and flowers, that he was really at home.

No doubt there was another side to all this. Cowper's despair, his religious melancholy, his madness, invests him with a far more tragic interest than the sunnier aspect of his life. Mr. Benham's treatment of this difficult subject is wiser and more just than that of preceding biographers, but in his effort to be fair to the Calvinistic school among whom the poet was unhappily thrown, he has fallen into the very common fault of unfairness towards the religion of his age. "All writers," he tells us, "agree in holding that it was an evil time both in faith and practice"; and he adopts Mr. Pattison's verdict that it was "an age destitute of depth and earnestness; an age whose poetry was without romance, whose philosophy was without insight, and whose public men were without character; an age of 'light without love,' whose very merits were of the earth, earthy." Estimates of this

kind always omit from the religion of the eighteenth century the one essential factor of the problem, the religious element itself. It is only by the exclusion of Nelson and Newton, of Wesley and Romaine, from its religion that we can pronounce it "an evil time in faith and practice," as it is only by the exclusion of Hume and Berkeley that we can pronounce its philosophy to be "without insight." It is amusing that Bishop Wilson, the divine in whom Mr. Arnold has lately found "light" and "love" most eminently combined, should be a divine of this very age of "light without love." The eighteenth century followed two centuries during which the world's mind had been wholly set on religious subjects and theological strife. Against this entire absorption of human energy into a single channel there was, no doubt, a strong and healthy reaction. Literature, science, mechanical enterprise, commercial activity all claimed their part in human effort. Within the religious pale itself there was, no doubt, a great change, and above all a vigorous reaction against the narrowness of theological systems. But it would be hard to count this reaction irreligious, as the Jacobite parsons counted it from whom our modern censures are mostly taken, unless we count justice and mercy so. The Latitudinarian school practically gave the tone to English religion during the eighteenth century, and in truth and fairness of theology the Latitudinarians stood far beyond any who had preceded them. That it was the age of Evidences

simply proves that, unlike later divines, scholars of the Paley stamp cheerfully accepted the test of free inquiry, the ultimate appeal to reason, and the task, possible or impossible, of reconciling its conclusions with faith. To the revived fanaticism of the Puritan school such a course seemed godless enough, just as to Cowper or Newton science and criticism seemed audacious defiances of Divine wisdom. But it is as difficult to accept the verdicts of Calvinism on these subjects as it is to accept the dictum of Mr. Pattison that the exhibition of religious truth for practical purposes was confined in "the period of the Evidences" to a few obscure writers. The writers of the *Sacra Privata*, the *Serious Call*, and the Saturday essays of the *Spectator* can scarcely be called obscure. That Cowper isolated himself from all the healthy effort and sober religion of his day, that his whole life flung itself into the gloomy fanaticism of men like Newton, we are far from considering, with Mr. Benham, an inevitable result of his religious earnestness. It might have been avoided, and had it been avoided one element at least of his melancholy, the form which it eventually assumed, would at any rate have been removed. But Calvinism furnished only one element of it. Its main cause lay in the man himself. It is difficult not to see how much of the religious excitement which ended in his terrible mania sprang from Cowper's craving for a sphere of feeling and action wider and greater than was naturally his own. There was in him a restlessness

that beat its wings fiercely against the bars of the cosy little cage in which he lived. For all that was really powerful in himself and in his work he cared least. He was an exquisite painter of character and landscape, but his aim was to be a moralist and a didactic poet. He put down his graceful vignettes of gypsies and poplar shades to assume the airs of a Christian Juvenal. He pronounced other themes to be worn out, and religion to be a new and unworked theme of his own discovery. But for a philosophical survey of the world with which his censure pretended to deal he was thoroughly unqualified. His politics were the mild Whiggery of a little country town. His classical training had left him utterly ignorant of history or science. "He foresees," says Mr. Benham, "the end of the world close at hand. He rails at the natural philosopher who attempts to discover the causes of physical calamities such as earthquakes or diseases, at the historian who takes the trouble to investigate the motives of remarkable men, at the geologist and astronomer." Nothing can be more wearisome than his condemnation of pleasures and a world of which he knew nothing. It is with the mere shibboleth of party that "he denounces oratorios, chess, whist-playing, and smoking as severely as he does breaches of the moral law." And it is the more unreal that the moment we get beneath the surface we find ourselves obliged to distinguish between Cowper himself and this Cowper who is simply repeating the jargon of his friends. In himself he

preserves throughout a perfect moderation and good sense. "When he met with a smoker in the person of his friend Bull, his anger and scorn were over and done with directly." He did not hesitate to express his honest admiration of such a rake as Churchill. If he wrote like a bigot against Papists, he cancelled the passage on making the acquaintance of one, like a man of sense. He even made friends with a Roman Catholic family whom his neighbours shunned. His reply to Newton, who had censured him for intercourse with "worldly" persons, is a bold rebuke to his friend's fanaticism. "I could show you among them two men," he writes, "whose lives, though they have but little of what we call evangelical light, are ornaments to a Christian country—men who fear God more than some who profess to love Him." The unreality became far more terrible in its results when it passed into the sphere of personal piety. Cowper was by nature a gay, cheerful humorist; what he aimed at was the position of a stern religious enthusiast, or the gloomy seclusion of a rebel against God. He had the longing of an unquiet spirit for the imaginative woe of griefs which were really strange to his nature. Much of his earlier feeling must have been purely imaginary; a simple comparison of dates shows him writing merry letters to one friend at the very moment when he is inditing the gloomiest expressions of spiritual despair to another. But the conception of a struggle with Heaven, of his position as the

"Castaway" of Divine wrath, gave a grandeur and intensity to Cowper's life which had its pleasure as well as its pain. Byron hurling defiance at a God he feared is a different picture from Cowper playing with his knife and fork while grace was said lest bystanders should think he ventured to join in the prayer. But in both poets there is the same indication of a satisfaction, differing greatly indeed in point of consciousness, at an isolation which gave them something of the grandeur of Satan. "Hell disavows and Deity disowns me" might have fallen from the lips of Lara. Even in the tenderer mood of Cowper's religious melancholy there are traces of the same longing for isolation—isolation from men where not from Heaven. In the touching verses in which he paints himself as a "stricken deer" it is easy to note the unconscious pride with which he regards his own severance from the mass of men :—

> Since then, with few associates, in remote
> And silent woods I wander, far from those
> My former partners of the peopled scene ;
> With few associates, and not wishing more.
> Here much I ruminate, as much I may,
> With other views of men and manners now
> Than once, and others of a life to come.
> I see that all are wanderers, gone astray
> Each in his own delusions.

We have left ourselves little space to speak of Cowper purely as a poet. He was far from being the first to introduce landscape into poetry ; in his own day Thomson had done this on a far larger scale

than he ever attempted. But he is perhaps the first English poet who ever painted the personal joy of country landscapes. The author of the *Seasons* unwinds a glorious roll of scenes, but he never touches them or is himself a part of them. Cowper walks with us through the country he paints, splashing up muddy lanes to the peasant's cottage on the little hill, or stumbling among the molehills into the meadow "ankle-deep in moss and flowery thyme." Only one English poet can be compared with him in the sense of actual familiarity with the scenes he describes, in that sense of open-airiness, if we may venture to coin the word, which pervades the delicious pictures of his "Task." But Wordsworth climbing Helvellyn, or skirting lake and mere, is another sight from Cowper wandering along the sedgy banks of Ouse. The poet of the Lakes deliberately chose his home among scenes of special grandeur, apart from common English sights and sounds. Cowper took Huntingdon and Olney as he found them. It is his perception of the beauty in common sights and sounds, his general all-embracing pleasure in them, that is the note of his poetry. He may be said to have discovered the field so exquisitely worked out since by Tennyson, the landscape of the Eastern counties, with its slow rivers and spacious meadows, the tranquil landscape of half England. No finer picture of such a scene has ever been painted than that which stands at the entrance of the "Task"; and still more exquisite, while more familiar, are the well-known lines :—

> The poplars are felled, farewell to the shade
> And the whispering sound of the cool colonnade.

It is something of the tenderness of colour, the breadth and repose of these large landscapes, that makes such pictures as that of Evening and Night in the "Winter Evening" so charming. Cowper finds another point of likeness with Wordsworth in the closeness and fineness of his observation. His delight in the varying shades of tinting among the nearer woods, his view of the sheep pouring from the sheep-folds—

> At first, progressive as a stream, they seek
> The middle field ; but scattered by degrees,
> Each to his choice, soon whiten all the land—

are perfectly Wordsworthian. It is curious that both poets have noticed the unity of act among cattle in a meadow. Wordsworth's "there are forty feeding like one" is famous enough ; Cowper's passage is less known :—

> The very kine that gambolled at high noon,
> The total herd receiving first from one
> That leads the dance a summons to be gay,
> Though wild their strange vagaries, and uncouth
> Their efforts, yet resolved with one consent
> To give such act and utterance as they may
> To ecstasy too big to be supprest.

But between the relation of the two poets to the nature they describe there is a very wide difference. In Wordsworth there is little or no trace of any personal love or familiarity with any living creature. The linnet is little more than a bright creature

stirring among the leaves. The lark is a symbol of domestic affection. The cuckoo is no bird, but a wandering voice. Cowper, on the other hand, is like Burns in his lovingness of temper and tone. His descriptions are often like so many soft caresses. He moves among the life of nature with a sort of playfellow feeling: the hare, to borrow his own words, scarce shuns him; the stock-dove still coos in the pine-tree, nor suspends her long love-ditty at his approach; the squirrel, "flippant, pert, and full of play," springs up the neighbouring beech only to "whisk his brush and perk his ears and stamp and scold aloud with all the prettiness of feigned alarm and anger insignificantly fierce." The most famous of Cowper's lines is as characteristic as it is famous: "God made the country and man made the town." And yet his own pictures of rural life are the best refutation of his words. No poet is more sternly realistic in his treatment of country people. The very woodsman marches along with his pipe in his mouth, "with pressure of his thumb to adjust the fragrant charge of a short tube that fumes beneath his nose." The riot, the dispute, the drunkenness of the village alehouse takes a form singularly in contrast with the lyrical eulogies of Burns. We see the thief and the poacher prowling along the country lanes; the very milkmaid has flaunting ribbons on her head; if the village bells fall in melodious chime on his ear, the poet sketches with unsparing pen the drone of the village parson. Cowper is no writer

of sham pastorals; his rustics are photographed as clearly and truthfully as the gentry of his social satire. It is in this combination of hard truthfulness in human portraiture with loving fidelity in his delineation of the natural life and scenery among which men live, that half Cowper's power consists. Of his use of humour we have spoken before, but it is especially noteworthy in its contrast with Pope's poetic use of wit.

APPENDIX

MOBERLY'S BAEDA[1]

(1869)

. . . . .

We are not fanatical worshippers of the Saxon Chronicles, nor do we think that short notes of events are more valuable, or necessarily more true, when they are written in English, than when they are written in Latin. But the history of the English Conquest as these annals give it us cannot be pooh-poohed as "tradition." What is really wanted is a cool and unbiassed investigation of their real historical authority, and to such an investigation Baeda, we think, makes a very important contribution. The careful researches of Mr. Earle have conclusively proved, what indeed is plain on the very face of the Chronicle, that in its earlier form it is a mere chronicle of Wessex, and that it was probably drawn up, and from time to time continued, at Winchester.

[1] *Venerabilis Baedae Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum, Historia Abbatum, et Epistola ad Ecgberctum, cum Epistola Bonifacii ad Cudberthum.* By G. H. Moberly, M.A. London: Macmillan and Co. 1869.

The date of the first complete redaction of this portion has been fixed at a year or two after the death of Swithun, but nothing on the face of the annals themselves gives us any intimation of the era of their commencement. Now Daniel, Bishop of Winchester, was a friend and correspondent of Baeda, and it was to him that the historian was indebted for the West Saxon details which he has given us. The words of the preface are remarkable :—

> Sed et Danihel reverentissimus Occidentalium Saxonum episcopus qui nunc usque superest, nonnulla mihi de historia ecclesiastica provinciae ipsius simul et proximae illi Australium Saxonum nec non et Vectae insulae, literis mandata declaravit.

Yet not a single fact of the conquest of Wessex or of Sussex or of the Isle of Wight appears to have been transmitted by Daniel to Baeda. Either no such annals as have come down to us existed at Winchester in the beginning of the eighth century, or else Baeda and Baeda's correspondent omitted them as foreign to "ecclesiastical history." The latter supposition, however, hardly squares with the conclusions which we should naturally draw, not merely from the large scope which Baeda gives himself throughout his work, but above all from the peculiar character of its opening. Up to the inroads of the Picts and Scots the book is little more than a copy or condensation of Orosius, with bits from the geographers and Eutropius, and a touch here and there of Baeda's own. From that point to the arrival of the English it is again a mere copy of Gildas,

abridged, chastened in style, and corrected in grammar. As yet, however, his work has been confined to the insertion of occasional explanatory notes and historical synchronisms; it is with the arrival of the invaders that his own independent contributions to history begin: the victory of the new-comers over the Picts, the detailed account of their country and their race, their alliance with the Picts against the Britons are distinct additions by Baeda. But these additions are based on no annals which have come down to us; no trace of "the Chronicle" breaks the quotations from Gildas. And that nothing but Gildas in a written shape was before him, we take to be clear from this, that with the abrupt close of Gildas, Baeda as abruptly breaks off, and that from this point to the landing of Augustine he is utterly silent. He seeks indeed to hide the gap by inserting an account of Germanus from the life by Constantius—of course utterly out of its place—and by placing here the passage in which Gildas describes the dissensions of his own times. Such an insertion proves at once his desire to give some account of the interval, while it proves as conclusively that he could have had no access to the detailed account which is given in the "Saxon Chronicle." The landing of Augustine again enables us to compare the two accounts for the century which reaches thence to the close of Baeda. During this period (if we deduct the translations from the ecclesiastical history with which it has been stuffed into decent proportions), the Chronicle is a meagre

account of the accession, wars, and conversion of the kings of Wessex, and, with the exception of the mission of Birinus, there is no point at which they touch. One circumstance, however, throws great doubt on the existence of this portion of the annals as a really contemporary account. The single fact which really illustrates the character of West Saxon politics at the time, the attempted assassination by the envoy of Cwichelm in 626, can hardly have been omitted from the letter of Daniel; it certainly must have had a place among the West Saxon annals, if annals of Bishop Daniel's time there were. It is very remarkable, therefore, that this particular entry, as it stands in the Chronicle, is a mere translation from Baeda.

EARL HAROLD AND BISHOP GISO

(1863)

In the History of the See of Wells, Bishop Giso must occupy a very conspicuous place. He was the first of the line of foreign prelates who ended in the Bishop-Abbot Savaric. He was the virtual founder of the Chapter. His own autobiography, singularly preserved to us, throws light not only on the peculiar history of his See, but on the general history of the Church of the Conquest.

Whatever interest, however, may belong to each of these aspects of Bishop Giso, his connexion with Earl Harold and the charges he brings against him are of far greater historical importance. Obscure as these charges are, and tedious as their minute examination may seem, no labour can be wasted which throws even the smallest light on the life of Harold. For there are few great Englishmen of whom we know so little, of whom the little that we seem to know is so darkened and perverted by the passions of the struggle in which he fell.

Not the least curious feature of these charges is

their gradual growth from the days of Bishop Giso till their culmination in the pages of the County Historian. Giso (I shall presently give his story *in extenso*) states that on the death of his predecessor, Bishop Duduco, Harold seized both the manors and the moveables which he had bequeathed to his See. Throughout Eadward's reign he, Giso, kept thinking of excommunicating the Earl for this sacrilege, but more prudently confined himself to remonstrances which remained without effect till the death of the Confessor. Then, in the midst of his difficulties, Harold promised not only to restore what he had taken, but to add yet ampler gifts to the See—a promise whose fulfilment was prevented by his death.

The next appearance of the story is in the History of the Bishops of Bath and Wells, given in the *Anglia Sacra;* a work of the fourteenth century, and generally quoted as by "The Canon of Wells." On Giso's return from his consecration at Rome, says this author, he found the Canons reduced to mendicancy by the sacrilege of Harold, and begged for their sustenance Wedmore of the Confessor, and Mark of his queen. On his "invasion" of the Crown, however, Harold "at once confiscated the possessions of the said Giso and the Canons of Wells," which were only partly restored by the Conqueror.

The growth of Harold's one sacrilege into two, and the change of Giso's "promise of restitution" into the Canons' "immediate confiscation," seems bold enough, but it is eclipsed by Godwin. In *his*

version, Giso complains of the sacrilege to the Confessor, but meets with "cold comfort," while on his death the Bishop is "faine to flye the land till such time as Harold the sacrilegious usurper being vanquished and slaine, William the Conqueror was a meane to restore not onely him to his place and country, but his church also to all that the other had violently taken from it."

A single "flight," however imaginary, could not satisfy the County Historian, Mr. Collinson; in *his* account Harold is banished and his estates given to the See, then Harold returns and Giso goes into exile, then Harold becomes King, sentences the Bishop to perpetual banishment, resumes his property and holds it to his death!

Such statements, of course, need no refutation; their only interest lies in the striking parallel they afford to the gradual growth of monastic legends and historic "pretty stories." This is a case of mere transmission from one mouth to another, and, like the game of "Russian Scandal," may show how, without any deliberate untruthfulness, men, simply copying the one from the other, may by gradual exaggeration not only distort, but utterly reverse the account from which they started.

Turning, however, to the original charge against Harold, I feel that as the best witness against Bishop Giso is Bishop Giso himself, it is only fair to give his own words from the "Historiola de Primordiis Episcopatus Somersetensis," published in Mr. Hunter's

Ecclesiastical Documents, by the Camden Society. "Huic successit Duduco, natione Saxo . . . qui possessiones quas haereditario jure a Rege ante episcopatum promeruerat, monasterium videlicet Sancti Petri in civitate Gloucestrensi situm cum omnibus ad se pertinentibus, et villam quae Kungresbiria dicitur, atque aliam Banewelle nuncupatam, roboratas cyrographis regiae autoritatis ac donationis Deo Sanctoque Andreae tempore Edwardi piissimi regis obtulit: vestimenta quoque sacerdotalia, relliquias sanctorum, vasa altarea concupiscibilia, libros plurimos, et omnia quae habere poterat, jam imminente die vocationis suae adhibuit: et xx^{mum} vij^{um} ordinationis suae agens annum menses quoque vij et dies vij obdormivit in Domino . . . Haroldus vero tunc temporis dux occidentalium Saxonum non solum terras invadere verum etiam episcopalem sedem omnibus hiis spoliare non timuit. Sed et Stigandus archiepiscopus Cantuariorium . . . praefatum monasterium injusta ambitione a rege sibi dari petiit et impetratum ad horam obtinuit."

In this passage (which, simple as it is, becomes almost unintelligible in Mr. Hunter's translation) a distinction is clearly intended between two separate bequests made at two different times. The personalty, the vestments, relics, books, etc., were a deathbed[1] and apparently a verbal legacy, for Giso omits here all mention of the "cyrographs" which he is so

[1] "Imminente die vocationis suae," translated by Hunter in defiance of the whole drift of the story "just before he became Bishop." So, too, he muddles the two bequests into one.

careful to specify in the other case. The first bequest then is but an instance of the ever-recurring question of deathbed legacies to the clergy, and Harold's assertion of his legal right as Earl to the personalty of the deceased proves only his disbelief of the story of the four or five Canons.

The real matter at issue, however, is the Earl's seizure of the Manors of Congresbury and Banwell, and it is therefore of great importance to note the true character of this estate. It had never formed any part of the property of the See or of the Canons. It had been granted by Cnut to Duduco "ante episcopatum," while he was but a royal clerk. He retained it as Bishop, but this in nowise affected its private character. From Giso's tale one would infer that Harold's seizure of it reduced the Canons to poverty; whatever their poverty may have been it cannot have resulted from a loss of what they never had. The manors belonged to Duduco in allodial tenure, "hereditario jure," and might pass to the Church by his will, supposing the will did not violate the original conditions of the grant. In case of such violation, or of the execution of no will at all, the granted lands would of course revert to the Crown. If they reverted to the Crown they would probably be at once granted away to the royal favourites, and nothing would be more natural than to find them, as we do find them, in the hands of Harold and Stigand.

Now, that the grant did in some way revert thus seems almost certain from the very words used by

Giso in his charge against the Archbishop, "praefatum monasterium injusta ambitione *a Rege sibi dari* petiit, et impetratum ad horam obtinuit." Harold's share of the estate would naturally be obtained in the same way as Stigand's, and the "injustice," if there were any in the matter, would rest rather with the Crown than with the Earl.

But was there any injustice? According to Giso's statement Duduco had provided against the reversion of the grant, by its bequest to the See of Wells—a bequest confirmed by royal charters, to which, however, no date is assigned but the very indefinite one of "the time of King Eadward." No trace of these is to be found now among Eadward's numerous charters, and it must not be forgotten that Giso is not speaking here from his own personal knowledge, but solely from the information of the four or five mendicant Canons of Wells. Very serious difficulties indeed present themselves if we accept the story of the Canons as Giso reports it.

1. It was a time when the very multiplicity of charters prove the force which they were supposed to possess; Eadward was superstitious in his regard for the rights of the Church; Giso was one of his own clerks, his own nominee to the bishopric, and supported by him in his subsequent efforts for its restoration and enrichment. In the teeth of these facts we must suppose that the very instant Duduco dies, the King suffers his solemn charters to be torn to rags, the Church to be shamelessly plundered, the

Canons to be reduced to beggary, his favourite to be thwarted and left without redress.

2. What redress, however, did Giso seek? The natural course was that of an appeal to the King, and this Godwin asserts him to have made, and to have received but "cold comfort." But Godwin's "cold comfort" is not only unsupported by, but wholly contradictory to, the Bishop's own words. The King, he says, "honourably received" him on his return from Rome. "Tunc ecclesiam sedis meae perspiciens esse mediocrem, clericos quoque quattuor vel quinque absque claustro et refectorio esse ibidem, voluntarium me ad eorum astruxi adinstaurationem. Igitur pietate nulli secundo cum hujusmodi indigentiam intimarem, possessionem quae Wedmor dicitur pro remuneratione aeternae recompensationis in augmentum et sustentationem fratrum ibidem Deo servientium ab eo impetravi." And he specifies Queen Eadgyth, that is Harold's sister, as she "cujus adminiculo et suggestione hoc ad effectum venit." Another similar depredator, Alsi, who had appropriated Wynesham, Giso brings before the County Court and obtains judgment against him. But during the six years of Eadward's reign he appeals neither to king nor courts against Harold.[1]

[1] I merely notice the charter assigned to Eadward at this period (Codex Diplomaticus, 816), lest I should be charged with overlooking it. It is a gross forgery. It is dated May 20, 1065, yet "ante hoc biennium Romae direxi," says Eadward of Giso. Giso is himself the scribe, and can hardly have so soon forgotten that his visit had taken place not two years before, but four, in 1061. Among the manors of the See we find "Mercern" or Mark, which

3. The evidence of the charters which survive relative to the subject may indeed be made to tell either way. On the one hand, they are uniformly addressed to Harold while apparently assuming that Giso enjoyed the same endowments as his predecessor Duduco; on the other, there are allusions to restitution which might be adduced in proof of the occurrence of some sacrilege or other. That announcing the grant of the bishopric begins (Codex Diplom. 835): "King Eadward greets Earl Harold and Abbot Aylnoth and Shire-reeve Godwin and all my thegns in Somerset friendly; and I have you to know that I have given Giso my priest this bishopric here with you and all its belongings . . . as fully and as freely as Duduco or any bishop before him had in all things. And if there be any land taken out of that bishopric I will that it come in again." Another charter (838) repeats the grant of the Episcopal property "as fully and as freely as any bishop before him had in all things," and ends, "and if anything be unlawfully taken out of that bishopric whether it be in land or in any other thing, aid him for love of me that it come in again so that he have right." 834 is a mere epitome of these: "King Eadward greets Earl Harold and Abbot Egelnoth and Shire-reeve Godwin and all my thegns in

was not given by Eadgyth till after the Confessor's death. But the crowning blunder is in the crediting of the See in 1065 with Banwell and Congresbury by the very Giso who himself complains that they were then in Earl Harold's possession. Kemble marks the charter as spurious.

Somerset friendly; and I have you to know that I will that Bishop Giso possess his lands now as his predecessors before him did, and I will not that any man do him any wrong." Both the "as fully and as freely" and the restitution clause in these charters may be mere copies of the usual diplomatic formulæ; if indeed the latter be more and refer to Harold's sacrilege, it is hardly conceivable that they should be addressed to Harold himself, and should call on him "for my love" to *aid the Bishop* in procuring restitution.

4. On Eadward's death, however, Giso represents himself as remonstrating, and his remonstrances as attended with complete success. "Haroldum etiam ducem qui ecclesiam mihi commissam" (spoliaverat, inserted by Mr. Hunter) "nunc secreto nunc palam correctum pari sententia cogitabam ferire," *i.e.* of excommunication. "Sed defuncto Rege Edwardo . . . cum ille regni gubernacula suscepisset, non solum ea quae tulerat se redditurum, verum etiam ampliora spopondit daturum. Praeoccupante autem illum judicio divinae ultionis," etc. If the absence of extant charters prevents our testing Giso's account of the bequest of Bishop Duduco, we can at any rate test his accuracy here. Harold's charter as King may be found in the Codex Diplomaticus (976), and far from containing any acknowledgment of wrong, is the strongest proof of Harold's unconsciousness of having done any wrong at all. It runs indeed in a strangely friendly fashion. "Harold King greets

Ailnoth Abbot and Tovid and all my thanes in Somerset friendly; and I have you to know that I will that Bishop Giso have sac and soc over his land and over his men, and toll and teme and infangtheof in borough and out as fully and freely as he had aforetime in King Eadward's days in all things." They are to support him whenever he needs, "and I will that no man do him any wrong (unlag) in anything." If Harold were the wrong-doer, the clause is the language of sarcasm rather than of restitution. But there is no question either of the one or the other. The words are those of one who is on good terms with Giso, and who has not the slightest suspicion of a wish on the Bishop's part for more than he possessed in King Eadward's days.

5. Harold fell, whether by "the judgment of a Divine vengeance" is another question, and William was not likely to refuse to listen to a charge of sacrilege against his rival. And Giso is prompt with complaints—but of Alsi and Stigand, not of Harold. "Dux vero victoria potitus, cum regni gubernacula post eum suscepisset et a me de injuria mihi allata querimoniam audisset, Wynesham ecclesiae resignavit . . . et monasterium Oswaldi se additurum cum citius posset spopondit." Godwin, indeed, says "Giso was faine to fly the land till such time as Harold the sacrilegious usurper being vanquished and slaine William the Conqueror was a meane to restore not onely him to his place and country, but his church also to all that the other had violently taken from it

except some small parcels that (I know not by what meanes) had been conveighed unto the monastery of Gloucester;" but his authority is merely the Canon of Wells, and the Canon's account, while it shows an utter ignorance of the matter, is really more accurate than it is meant to be. Soon after William's coronation "cito postea fere omnes possessiones ab Ecclesia Wellensi per Haroldum ablatas Gisoni restituit, exceptis quibusdam ad monasterium S. Petri Glocestriae applicatis et exceptis Congresburye, Banewell, et Kilmington et plurimis aliis." The writer never suspected that his exceptions embraced the whole of Bishop Duduco's legacy, the whole of Earl Harold's plunder. So far, indeed, was the Conquest from enriching the See, that it seems to have impoverished it. Milverton, a gift of Eadgyth's in King Eadward's time (Cod. Dip. 917), had ere Domesday survey passed to the Crown: Ash Priors, which had been held by the Bishop, was then held by Roger de Arundel "de rege injuste." Banwell, indeed, had been granted by William to the Bishopric in his eleventh year (according to the Canon of Wells); but Congresbury remained in the hands of the Crown till the reign of King John.

This grant of Banwell to the See, late as it was, seems to me the only circumstance which at all tends to confirm the story of Giso. Of the actual facts he is no witness, for they took place during his absence at Rome, and they really rest on the tittle-tattle of the four "mendicant Canons." We may note, too.

that on all questions connected with his See before his own accession, Giso shows the natural ignorance of a foreigner: he places Duduco's accession in 1030, instead of 1033; he blends together Duduco's two predecessors, Merewit and Brightwin, into a "Brythcri episcopus Welliae ecclesiae Merechyt cognominatus." His account is inconsistent both with itself and the outer facts; take it away, and the matter becomes at once intelligible. Thus much at any rate is clear, that the disputed manors were during Duduco's life his own private fief and nowise the property of the See; that they would on his death in due course revert to the Crown; that they did so revert and were regranted to Stigand and Harold; that no legal claim to them seems to have been made by the Bishop in Eadward's days; that Harold when King seems by his charter to have been utterly unconscious of such a claim; that no such claim was among those laid before—or at least admitted by—William on his accession, that the tone of Harold in his only extant charter is that of a friend of the See, rather than a plunderer; that his sister Eadgyth was a steady benefactor of the See during both her reign and her widowhood. Facts such as these point, I think, to a verdict somewhat different from the common verdict of "sacrilege."

THE CHRONICLES OF ANJOU[1]

(1873)

ALTHOUGH the collection of Angevin Chronicles, which forms part of a valuable series of works issued by the Historical Society of France, has been for some years before the public, it seems to be little known on this side of the Channel. Even in such recent books as Mr. Freeman's *History of the Norman Conquest* the references are still to D'Achery's *Spicilegium* and the like, nor have we found as yet a single English instance of the use of M. Marchegay's collection, or of the new and very valuable materials he has brought to the illustration of the early history of Anjou. Important as the study of Angevin history must always be, whether in its bearing on the fortunes of England or on those of France, it is remarkable that the work is almost the first attempt which has been made towards a critical study of the story of the Counts. By some inexplicable ill-luck Anjou has fared worse in the matter of historical

[1] *Chroniques d'Anjou, recueillies et publiées pour la Société de l'Histoire de France.* Par MM. Paul Marchegay et André Salmon. Vols. I. II. Paris.

research than any of the provinces around it. For Poitou we have the masterly work of Besly, for Brittany the great collections of Lobineau and Dom Morice. In later times the industry of M. de Jubainville and the Abbé Voisin has thrown a flood of light on the histories of Touraine and Le Mans. Anjou, on the other hand, remains without any adequate modern account of its past. The older books of Marolles and Bourdigné are of the most worthless sort, and the later narrative of Bodin is brief and superficial. As to the original authorities for Angevin history, they have remained till the appearance of the present work partly unprinted, partly scattered through the not very accessible collections of Labbé, D'Achery, and Dom Bouquet, while no critical attempt has been made to estimate their real worth or their relation to each other. Of the two volumes as yet issued, the first is by far the most important: its contents, indeed, comprise all the primary materials for the early history of the Counts —the Autobiography of Fulc Rechin, the Life of Geoffry le Bel, the account of the Lords of Amboise, the *Gesta Consulum*, and the history of the Counts by Thomas of Loches, a work printed for the first time, but in which the earlier Angevin history, as we have it now, really took its accepted shape. It is a considerable gain to get such a mass of materials as this, printed in a convenient form, and evidently edited with a good deal of care. Our gratitude, however, is a little tempered by the absence of any prefatory state-

ment either as to the manuscripts employed in the formation of the text, or of the view which the editors have been led by their researches to take as to the relation and value of the works they have published.[1] The omission is the more vexatious that the difficulty of ascertaining the real worth and interconnection of the authorities on which historians have for the most part relied in their account of the earlier annals of Anjou is very great indeed.

The first and most authentic memorial of Angevin history is the short Autobiography of Count Fulc Rechin ; and, if we believe its author, the information as to his predecessors which is given in it was derived from Geoffry Martel, and represents all that the Comitial House in the eleventh century knew of its origins. But this information, if we compare it with the accounts so glibly rendered only a century later, is of a somewhat startling sort. Fulc Rechin is

[1] These words were evidently written before the writer had seen M. Emile Mabille's Introduction (published 1871) to the first volume of the *Chroniques d'Anjou* (which had been issued by the Soc. de l'Hist. de France in 1856). This article is therefore specially interesting as showing how, without any external evidence to guide him, he detected the misplacement of John of Marmoutier's Procemium in the volume before him, and found in that Procemium the key to the authorship of the final redaction of the *Gesta Consulum ;* thus reaching at a bound a conclusion which M. Mabille had established after an elaborate examination of the MSS.

The ascription of the *Historia Comitum Andegavensium* to Thomas of Loches, accepted in this article—as it was in the volume under review—is now known to be erroneous. It was first impugned by M. Mabille in the Introduction above mentioned ; and the true origin of the *Historia* was shown for the first time in 1876, by Dr. Stubbs, in his preface to the second volume of his edition of Ralph de Diceto.—[Ed.]

diffuse enough about his own times; he has a good deal to say about Fulc Nerra, and though he knows less about Geoffry Grisegonnelle, he tells us of his Breton and Poitevin wars, and of his death at Marson. But of Geoffry's predecessors he knows nothing but the names. "Quorum quatuor Consulum virtutes et acta, quia nobis in tantum de longinquo sunt ut etiam loca ubi corpora eorum jacent nobis incognita sint, digne memorare non possumus," says Fulc Rechin. It is plain from his words that the tombs in the cathedral at Tours, so well known in the twelfth century, did not exist in the eleventh. But more things had been built up in that interval of a hundred years than the tombs at Tours. If Geoffry Martel and Fulc Rechin knew little of their own ancestors, the author of the *Gesta Consulum*, a century afterwards, knew, or claimed to know, a great deal. In spite of the falsehoods and inaccuracies which any one detects at a glance in this work, its historic claims have been generally admitted: Sir Francis Palgrave has transferred to his pages the story of a Breton woodman with which the *Gesta* open the annals of the Counts; and even Mr. Freeman, though correcting them at every step, allows them a certain authority. No one, however, has as yet investigated the question of the authorship of these *Gesta*, or of their relation to the earlier works on which they profess to be based. Now it is a remarkable fact that we appear to possess all the materials for the history of the Counts which were

known to exist in the twelfth century. In the curious Proœmium prefixed to the "Historia Abbreviata Consulum Andegavensium," printed in the volume before us (a preface which, as we hope afterwards to show, really belongs to another work), the writer thus reviews his authorities :—

> Primus scriptor extitit Thomas Luchensis, qui breves chronicas nomine Odonis (or Adonis) abbatis intitulatas ut ab ejus ore audivi repperit, et multa quae famâ vulgante cognovit addidit. Secundus extitit Robinus et Brito Ambaziacensis qui ipsas chronicas emendaverunt, et quaedam ut vivâ voce ab ipsis audivi addiderunt. Tertius ego ex multis historiis multa addidi.

It is plain that the last three works, that which followed this Proœmium and its immediate predecessors by Thomas of Loches and Robin of Amboise, were simply expansions of the "breves chronicas," which bore the name of Abbot Odo or Ado—chronicles similar to, or it may be identical with, the earlier Annals of St. Albin, or the Chronicle of the Abbey of Vendôme, which are given by Labbé. Of the work of Thomas of Loches we knew, till the appearance of M. Marchegay's book, only fragments such as those given by Dom Bouquet in his notes to the *Gesta Consulum;* but there were enough to suggest, what its publication *in extenso* proves, that it is to Thomas that we owe the main outlines of the story of the early Counts which the *Gesta* have made familiar. The forester Torquatius, Tortulf at the Court of Charles the Bald, the adventures of Ingelger, the investiture of Fulc the Red, the piety of Fulc the

Good,—all, in spite of Fulc Rechin's ignorance of them, and the absence of every name before Grisegonnelle's from the short annals we have mentioned, make their appearance in Thomas. Geoffry Greygown's own life is summed up in the two wonderful fights with Ethelwulf the Dane and Edelthred the Suabian; a mysterious Count Maurice, unknown to any other writer, is introduced between Geoffry and Fulc the Black, and the account of the latter is made up out of extracts from Glaber and the queer stories of his adventures at Jerusalem. That of Geoffry Martel is a little fuller; but here the work practically ends, for the three following Counts are dismissed in a few lines, and an extract from his biography by John of Marmoutier, then just published, suffices for Geoffry the Handsome. The character of the work, in full, is just what we might expect from the mention of it in the passage we have quoted; on the basis of the slight annals which bore Ado's name, and which were probably like those we possess, mere jottings of isolated events, Thomas of Loches has built up out of the stories of jester and trouveur a tissue of legends and fables which have passed ever since for the early history of Anjou.

As we remarked, however, before, this legendary matter has till now been known, not directly through Thomas, but indirectly through his copyist in the *Gesta Consulum*—a work which had the good luck to be printed by D'Achery in his *Spicilegium*, and which every historic scholar will thank the present editors

for reprinting in this more accessible form. Now the *Gesta* as it stands is a rather mysterious production. First, we find it in a very odd place, serving as the second book of a history of the Lords of Amboise, which seems to have been put together soon after the accession of Henry II. to the English throne, and which we shall probably be pretty right in identifying with the production of Rabin (or Robin) and Brito of Amboise, mentioned in the passage we have before quoted. Before getting fairly to work on the story of the Lords of Amboise, Robin and Brito, if they are the authors, have chosen to indulge in two preludes: the first, under the name of "De Compositione Castri Ambaziae," being in reality an odd medley of jottings about Cæsar, Clovis, Charles the Great, and Hugh Capet; while the second forms, as we have said, the work known as the "Gesta Consulum Andegavensium." Now the Counts of Anjou were overlords of Amboise, and a short account of them, such as the actual prologue to this second part promises, was natural and appropriate enough. "Nunc," says this prologue, "de Consulibus Andegavorum quae scripta nimis confuse rudique sermone reperi quam verissime potero paucis verbis, breviter et commodo enucleabo." But the puzzle is that the *Gesta* which follow in fulfilment of this promise are very far from being brief or in few words. On the contrary, they are long and verbose, nearly twice as long, in fact, as the main story which they prelude, the story of the Lords of Amboise. We believe that

an explanation of this difficulty may be found in the very opposite difficulty which meets us when we turn to the "Historia Abbreviata Consulum" at the close of M. Marchegay's volume. As it now stands, this work is preceded by the elaborate Prœmium from which we took the list of existing Angevin histories, and which promises us a work of some detail and elaboration. "Intentio igitur mea est," says the author, "vitam, mores, et actus antecessorum tuorum, Andegavorum Consulum in propatulo demonstrare." But this elaborate preface is at present followed by the "Historia Abbreviata," a brief summary of the character of each Count conveyed in a few lines. The probable solution of the whole matter seems to be that the two works have taken one another's place: that the so-called "Historia Abbreviata" is really the second portion of the work of the writers of Amboise, and that the Prœmium which now precedes this brief compilation belongs to the *Gesta Consulum*. The more elaborate history of the Counts would naturally supersede the rougher and briefer tale of the Chronicles of Amboise in general popularity; and in this case it seems to have been docked of its elaborate preface, and simply substituted for the earlier work without much care for the fitness of Brito's original prologue, which was suffered to remain. If this be so, the authorship of the *Gesta* is settled, for John of Marmoutier gives his name in the Prœmium, and it is plain that we have in them a later work of the biographer of Geoffry le Bel. The conclusion seems

almost inevitable when we compare the character of the *Gesta* with the description of the work promised by John. "Tertius ego ex multis historiis multa addidi," he says, in the close of the passage of which we have already quoted an earlier portion, "et ad auctoritatem historiae et studium audientium sive legentium nomine auctorum annotare curavi: I^mo. ex historiâ Francorum nonnulla; II°. ex historiâ Glabelli Rodulfi multa; III° ex chronicis Gaufredi Rechin aliqua; IV°. ex dictis Magistri Rabini quaedam necessaria; V°. ex scriptis Gauterii Compendiensis, Majoris Monasterii monachi non negligenda." The promise of the Proœmium tallies exactly with the real character of the *Gesta*. In the earlier portions of the work the romance of Thomas of Loches is simply dressed into historical shape by profuse quotations from Aimoin and Glaber, while his obvious errors are here and there corrected. The long account of Fulc Nerra is drawn from the history of the Lords of Amboise and from the French chroniclers, but repetition and an utter defiance of chronology render it nearly worthless. On the other hand, the lives of Geoffry Martel and of Fulc of Jerusalem, with the latter of which John's work practically ends, are of considerable value. The whole work is in reality a bad specimen of the "classical history" prevalent in the twelfth century, and its author lies, exaggerates, fables, misdates, jumbles persons and events together in so wonderful a fashion that we can hardly wonder that the continuators of Bouquet

resolved to exclude the *Gesta* from their collection, and were only driven from their resolve by the thought of their extensive use among historians.

Luckily for Angevin history we have, as has been seen, nearly all the authorities from which Thomas and John built up their tale, and from the middle of the tenth century the story of the Counts rests on independent and trustworthy sources. It is only the legendary period with which it opens which rests exclusively on the *Gesta* of Loches and Marmoutier —in other words, on a series of monastic and poetic inventions whose origin we can pretty accurately date in the later days of Geoffry le Bel. It is to the historic tastes of the Angevin Counts that we may very possibly attribute this perversion of their earlier history. Nothing is more remarkable in the series of rulers from Fulc the Good to our own John and Henry III. than their strong taste for literature, and especially for historic literature. The Autobiography of Fulc Rechin stands almost alone among the historic productions of the Middle Ages. In one of the few characteristic stories of Geoffry le Bel, we find him studying Vegetius during a long and difficult siege, and turning his study to very practical account. The historical taste of Henry II. is remarked by most writers of the time, and his children seem to have inherited his liking for books. Richard and his nephew Richard, King of the Romans, were both troubadours. The literary side of John's character is almost the only one on which it is possible to dwell

with anything but abhorrence. The taste of a sovereign tells quickly on his court; and as we may trace the influence of Henry Fitz-Empress in the great English historical school which sprang up in his later years, so the patronage of Geoffry may have had something to do with the historical revival in Anjou to which we owe the works of Thomas of Loches and John of Marmoutier. But though the Counts may have encouraged it, the revival itself must be regarded as part of the great intellectual awakening of the twelfth century. The work of William of Malmesbury, however superior in historic and literary value, is a work of the same class with the *Gesta Consulum.* In both we see the same reaction against the jejune and disconnected annals which they aimed at superseding; the same endeavour to fall back on the models of classical history, which were again claiming the attention of scholars; the same effort after a literary style of composition; the same adoption of a literary rather than a chronological order of arrangement; the same tendency to enrich their work by sketches of character, by philosophical reflection, by the use of State documents, and, above all, by pretty stories, prose versions for the most part of the verses of the ballad singer or trouveur. It is easy, of course, to dwell on the faulty sides of this movement, on the looseness and inaccuracy of statement, the muddle of chronology, the jumble of fact and romance which makes us every now and then fling down our Malmesbury or *Gesta* in disgust; but the step from the

annalist to the chronicler which they made, really determined the shape which, after all, history was to assume. History has often since fallen back to the style of the worst chronicler, but it has never fallen back into the style of the mere annalist. Some attempt there has always been to trace events to their causes, to examine the influence of human character on the fortunes of men, to vary the story by episodes and poetic details; and every attempt of this kind we owe to the historic school of the twelfth century. Like most of the bold intellectual experiments of the time, it failed to realise its own conception, partly from the want of adequate materials, and still more from the utter absence of any defined critical method in the use of them. In England the poetic side was the first to be cast away. The cool scepticism of William of Newburgh discarded romance, and the tendency of the great school of historians from Benedictus Abbas to Matthew Paris was to subordinate literary form and largeness of conception to an annalistic arrangement and documentary accuracy and fulness of statement. The more romantic element which the twelfth century had striven to introduce, on the other hand, crossed the Channel and flung off all restraints of truthfulness or morality in the gay and unscrupulous chit-chat of Froissart. Ever since the famous essay of Lord Macaulay, it has been the constant effort of modern historians to bring together the discordant elements which William of Malmesbury and his rivals first

dared to include in the scope of history. The effort has as yet been attended with very partial success, and the failure of one historic school to be accurate, and of another historic school to be human, may teach us a little indulgence even for such very bad specimens of the earliest attempts at a larger history as the twelfth-century chroniclers of Anjou.

THE END

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